THE SPEAKER

SATURDAY, APRIL 17, 1897.

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THE WEEK.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS: AT HOME.

THE House of Commons has met only once during the present week, it having adjourned for the Easter Recess at the close of the sitting on Monday. On the motion for the adjournment the question of Crete and Greece was raised by Sir Charles Dilke, who maintained that Crete did not want autonomy but union with Greece, and commented on the imbecility and helplessness of the European Concert. The chief speakers in the debate which followed were Mr. Curzon, Sir William Harcourt, and Mr. Balfour. Mr. Curzon declared that the Concert of Europe, so far from being helpless, had prevented a general war, stayed the bloodshed in Crete, and localised the disturbance on the Greco-Turkish frontier. Sir William Harcourt assailed the policy of the Government, which seemed to be to endorse whatever was decided upon by a majority of the European Powers, and protested against the policy of this country being thus placed in commission. He wished to know what Power it was that was opposed to the withdrawal of the Turkish troops, and why a Christian Governor of Crete had not been appointed. Mr. Balfour, after ridiculing the resolution of which Sir William Harcourt had given notice, but which he had subsequently withdrawn, defended the policy of Ministers and expressed his firm belief that the pledges given by the Powers with regard to the granting of autonomy to Crete would be fulfilled in their entirety. Mr. Labouchere subsequently challenged a division on the question of the adjournment, and was beaten by 210 votes to 49.

THE latter part of the sitting was occupied with Mr. Gerald Balfour's speech introducing the Bill for establishing a Board of Agriculture in Ireland. The Government had embodied in this measure the ideas which had inspired the recommendations of the Recess Committee. The new department would consist of the Chief Secretary as President, of a Vice-President who would be entitled to sit and vote in the House of Commons, and of a Commissioner of Agriculture. The work of the Department was not to be confined to agriculture, but would deal eventually—under the provisions of a Supplementary Bill—with industrial and technical education, as well as with fisheries and cottage industries. There would be not more than twelve members upon the Board, and it would have at its disposal a sum of about £150,000 a year.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT was the guest of the Eighty Club on Tuesday evening at a dinner held in the Hotel Cecil. There was a large attendance of members of the Club. The chair was taken by Sir George Trevelyan, who, in proposing the health of the guest of the evening, paid a warm tribute of praise to his qualities as a Parliamentary leader. Sir William Harcourt, in replying, devoted himself chiefly to the present condition of foreign affairs. He declared his belief that the policy of her Majesty's Ministers did not enlist the sympathy of their supporters. He protested against the manner in which the Concert of Europe had done its work with regard to Crete, and was emphatic in denouncing the idea that England should allow herself to be dragged at the heels of a combination of foreign Powers. There was, he declared, only one possible solution of the Cretan Question—the annexation of Crete by Greece.

APART from this speech, the only extra-Parliamentary political incidents worthy of note have been the demonstration of sympathy with Greece and Crete in Hyde Park on Sunday, and the speech of Sir Robert Reid on Wednesday evening at Manchester, at the annual meeting of the National Reform Union. He urged that the other Powers should be made to understand that England would make no sacrifice whatever to maintain the integrity of the Turkish Empire—but, if that integrity is to be anything beyond a convenient figment for covering the liberation of one or other of the subject peoples, the Powers must be very dense if they do not understand our attitude with regard to it—and he condemned no less strongly the blockade of Crete.

THE excellent circular issued by the Education Department to its school inspectors, requiring them to recommend the managers of Voluntary schools to make arrangements for the separate and special teaching of backward children in any schools where the number is sufficient to justify it, is no doubt somewhat embarrassing to necessitous schools, to say nothing of the advocates of economy. Relief is at hand from the "intolerable strain" of meeting the growing requirements of the Department with inadequate funds; but along with the relief comes a new requirement, the neglect of which is to entail the loss of the higher discipline and organisation grant, and, in some cases of persistent neglect, the withholding of the grant altogether. That the need is urgent is beyond question; the London School Board, in spite of the reactionary tendencies of

some of its members, has met it very successfully, and if the new associations of Voluntary schools have leisure for anything beyond distributing the grant, they might very well form the basis of machinery for effecting the same end. But still, the action of the Education Department must be rather inconvenient to a good many worthy supporters of the Government.

THE South Africa Committee concluded its sittings before Easter on Friday last week. Dr. Jameson was recalled on that day, and was closely questioned on the subject of those communications with Sir John Willoughby respecting which the latter witness had refused to make any explicit statement to the Committee. At the close of Dr. Jameson's examination Sir John Willoughby was again called, and he answered the questions put to him by the Committee in such a manner as to relieve himself from any of the penalties he might have incurred by his original obduracy. The explanations given by these two witnesses went to show that Sir John Willoughby, in writing his letter to the War Office, had relied upon nothing more than the general assurances given him by Dr. Jameson that when the raid had succeeded it would be all right with the Imperial authorities. He believed that the High Commissioner, Lord Rosmead, would accept the consequences of the raid, the success of which none of the raiders seem to have doubted. Both he and Dr. Jameson were quite prepared to guarantee the officers their commissions. Another witness examined on Friday was Dr. Wolff, a member of the Johannesburg Reform Committee. This gentleman admitted that it was the intention of the Committee, in conjunction with the raiders, to seize Pretoria, and make President Kruger a prisoner. They found, however, that the suspicions of the Boers had been aroused, and that this part of the plot could not succeed. It was, apparently, for this reason that the Reform Committee wished the raid to be postponed.

MRS. HUMPHRY WARD, in an admirable address last Saturday at Edmonton—on the occasion of the opening of another of the free libraries which so many communities now owe to Mr. Passmore Edwards's munificence—reminded her hearers of some neglected truths concerning the uses of those excellent and much-maligned institutions. Free Libraries, in the view of those ratepayers who do not use them, exist solely for the provision of novels and newspapers to the lower strata of society at other people's expense. Novels and newspapers, however, are eminently desirable for mental health, and this use of a Free Library—though it is the smallest of its uses—is defensible on the same grounds as the provision of a public park, though not, perhaps, in the same degree. But the true end of the institution is to provide opportunities for the few—opportunities of self-culture, which is an advantage to society at large: opportunities which the richer and better-educated classes find provided for them in large measure by University endowments and by the State. How eagerly such opportunities are availed of by struggling students among the artisan classes may be read in Mrs. Humphry Ward's glowing periods: and probably every experienced University Extension Lecturer could cap her instances of enthusiasm for learning under difficulties, by others which he has noted himself. "Equality of opportunity" used to be a motto of democracy. Where the founder and benefactor is not available—and Mr. Passmore Edwards cannot be ubiquitous or always here—the locality must take his place.

ANOTHER means of assistance to popular culture, but of a somewhat different kind, and—for the present, at least—only temporary in its character, was opened on Wednesday in a place where such aids are even more wanted than in the industrial suburb of Edmonton. The seventeenth of the series of annual picture exhibitions promoted by Canon Barnett—an exhibition which this year consists exclusively of works by Mr. Theodore Watts—was inaugurated with excellent addresses from Canon Barnett and Lord Crewe. It is to continue only for three weeks; but Canon Barnett announced that Mr. Passmore Edwards has again come forward with an offer to build a permanent gallery when a site is secured, and that a sum of six thousand pounds—of which four thousand are already subscribed—is wanted for the purchase of the site. That the exhibitions have proved a real success is beyond a doubt, and that they appeal to emotions only too likely to die of inanition in the daily round of life in a great city is equally so. And since it is these emotions, as Canon Barnett indicated, that form one of the bonds of our common humanity and stimulate our consciousness of it, there is an excellent reason for other social reformers to follow Mr. Passmore Edwards's lead.

ABROAD.

THE explosion—or, rather, series of explosions—on the frontiers of Thessaly and Epirus has come, and in a way which renders it very unlikely that war can be averted. On Friday morning last a band of Greek irregulars equipped by the Ethnikè Hetairia, after a most impressive leave-taking and solemn religious inauguration of their enterprise, crossed the frontier near Krania, in the district north of Trikkala, in Western Thessaly, and made towards Grevena, besieging, on the way, a small Turkish post at a village called Baltino. Other bands have crossed, or attempted to cross, the frontier elsewhere, from a point near the Vale of Tempe on the extreme east, to the extreme west near Arta. What measure of success their efforts have secured is doubtful: but their primary object seems to be to cut the Turkish communications [illegible] which must be extremely difficult to maintain in any case, being in a difficult country, where bad mule-paths, chiefly over mountain ranges or spurs, form the only roads—and so to make it possible for their comrades to seize Janina, which was promised to Greece by the Treaty of Berlin. Not only will this advance make it extremely difficult, whatever settlement may be arrived at in Crete, for the regular troops on each side to avoid being drawn into open conflict—and the prospects of Greece in that are very uncertain at best, though we may well doubt whether the Turkish army, marching by land, could get so far into Greece as the Maliac Gulf—but it opens up a prospect of prolonged guerilla warfare in Albania and Macedonia. There the Hellenic irregulars, if they can only find sufficient supplies, will have many advantages over the Turkish troops, and will be quite beyond the control of the Greek Government. Their success, as our Constantinople correspondent pointed out the other day, will be avenged by Turkish massacres of the peaceful part of the population of Macedonia. And then—what?

MEANWHILE nothing seems to be settled in Crete, though rumours of a settlement were rife in the middle of the week. The insurgents are thoroughly determined to hold out, and the Greek troops likewise. The Greek Premier, in asking the Boulè for a vote on account on Wednesday, suggested once more a solution of the Cretan difficulty which the sticklers for legality among the Powers are certain not to accept: and he gave no indication that, under present circumstances, the army would be withdrawn from the frontier. Even if a settlement is arrived at, moreover, it can hardly avail to recall the revolutionists from Janina. And it is not only in England—though another large Hyde Park demonstration last Sunday gave renewed expression to English sympathy with Greece—that the Concert of Europe is adversely

criticised. Even in Vienna, where Philhellenism is very much at a discount, the press of all parties is commenting on the incapacity of the Powers; so is the Russian press; so is the chief organ of the French Foreign Office; and the Italian Foreign Minister has hastened to disclaim any want of sympathy in Italy with Greece. Yet even so, the leader of the party which formerly followed Signor Crispi, Baron Sonnino, has not found himself able to support the vote of confidence in the Ministry on the Greek Question, but has voted with the Radicals. This is significant, inasmuch as it is his party, pre-eminently, who desire Italy to be a Great Power and to cultivate the friendship of Germany and Austria-Hungary.

FRIENDS of peace and sound finance must welcome the declaration made by the French Minister of Marine to the Naval Committee of the Chamber on Monday last. France cannot, according to Admiral Besnard, hope to compete with England in Naval expenditure, or even to spend the eight millions sterling on her Navy which M. Lockroy demands. This puts an end to the talk of our spending guineas where France spends pounds, and precludes the still more dangerous course on our part of launching out on a new scheme of Naval construction which would be obsolescent as soon as it was complete. Rich as France is, she cannot afford to increase the debt or go nearer the limit of her taxable capacity. The only regrettable thing is that the scheme should be necessary at all. As it stands, it is distinctly an incitement to the Naval jingoes of Germany to promote the Imperial plans of Naval extension.

THE new Austrian Reichsrath, according to the *Times* correspondent at Vienna, consists of no less than twenty-five separate political parties, or rather groups. Of th the Young Czech group, the most numerous, numbers 62, the Polish group, 59, the German Progressists, 50; while of the whole number (425 members), 255 may be counted as extremists of various sorts—including, we believe, at least three kinds of Socialists, and five or six, if not more, ultra-Nationalist groups of various race and speech; while a very considerable majority of the body is secondarily, if not primarily, Clerical. In a body so constituted, lively scenes may be expected, and the first has already taken place. On Friday of last week three groups of German-speaking members joined in an interpellation on the question of the recent concession to the Czechs of Bohemia in the matter of the recognition of their language; and some of the speakers declared that the result could only be to create a "Germania Irredenta" in the German-speaking districts of Bohemia. The town of Reichenberg in the extreme north has, we believe, showed signs in past years of a desire to assume that character—by dressing its police like Prussian soldiers, for example—but the introducers of the interpellation got very little satisfaction either from the Premier or from the House, which shelved their interpellation by 224 votes to 153.

BUT in a body so constituted, what chance is there for any satisfactory financial arrangement with Hungary? The Magyar race is cordially hated by all the Slav nationalities in the Empire, and the Hungarian Government no less cordially hated by all the Clericals and Anti-Semites—all the more because it has beaten them at home. Negotiations for the renewal of the decennial "compromise" have been dragging on since the beginning of last year, and conferences of the representatives of the two Ministries were to be held this week. But there seems so little expectation of a satisfactory settlement that it is reported the Emperor means to impose a solution by decree.

THE announcement that the Behring Sea Question is about to be reopened—sixteen months before the expiry of the *modus vivendi* which was settled by the arbitration held at Paris in 1893—may possibly tend to intensify the disfavour with which, after the virtual rejection of the Arbitration Treaty, the ruling powers of the United States must be viewed on this side of the Atlantic. It is desirable to remark, therefore, that what is to be revived is not the Behring Sea Question or the absurd pretensions made by the late Mr. Blaine, but merely the question of pelagic sealing, which is carried on by Americans and Canadians, or by Americans disguised as Canadians and sheltered by the British flag, to the great detriment of the prospects of the future wearers of sealskin, whether seals or human beings. The evils of the practice were fully set forth in our columns last January, and are pointed out still more emphatically by two experts in the April number of the *Forum*. As was noticed in our article, it is stated by the agent of the American company which has the monopoly of the seals on the Pribyloff Islands that 85 per cent. of the seals killed at sea last year were females; and though this evidence is necessarily biassed, the pelagic sealers themselves confess to from 25 to 40 per cent. Now it is obviously undesirable that females should be killed at all, especially as their slaughter always involves the death of one young one if not of two. According to the writers in the *Forum* the restrictions laid down in 1895 have distinctly failed in their object, and the question must be treated as a question not of law, but merely of natural history. If this is so—in other words, if the existence of the whole species of fur seal is really endangered—it would be the merest pedantry to object to reopening the question.

ANOTHER event which may indirectly lead to further exhibitions of jingoism in America is the appointment of three Commissioners—two aggressively Silverite, the third mildly so—to promote an International Monetary Conference. The step is the natural fulfilment of that pledge in the Republican programme which some people hastily assumed had only been put in for show. We do not suppose that the Commissioners will produce a Conference, or that such a Conference, if produced, will effect anything; but it may be as well to remember that the late General F. A. Walker, in his speech to the English Bimetallic League last summer, told them that practically everybody in America was a Bimetallist, except a few bankers with European connections and the Silverites, who exaggerate and caricature the Bimetallist fads; and that the fact that England (quite rightly, in our opinion) stops the way to the realisation of their hopes will be fully made use of by the jingoes of the United States.

LITERATURE, etc.

"THE TWO NOBLE KINSMEN," commonly put in the list of works ascribed to Beaumont and Fletcher, but professing in its first known edition to be by Fletcher and Shakespeare, and held by some commentators to be the joint production of Fletcher and Massinger, is the latest addition to the charming series of Temple Classics (J. M. Dent & Co.). Apart from the artistic beauty of parts of the play, it is interesting as a collaboration in which the collaborators failed entirely to blend their work into one whole. Anyone who cares to study this aspect of it will find all the necessary helps in this little volume, both in Dr. Herford's admirable introduction and in the tabular statement (here reprinted, by permission, from Dr. Furnivall's "Leopold Shakespeare")

IF housekeepers are in earnest in wishing to benefit the unemployed in East London, they should buy BRYANT & MAY'S Matches, and refuse the foreign matches which are depriving the workers in East London of a large amount in weekly wages.

of the distribution of scenes between the authors.—The latest volume (the sixth) of the Centenary Edition of Carlyle's works (Chapman & Hall) is the first volume of "Cromwell's Letters and Speeches," with a useful introduction by the editor, Mr. H. D. Traill, pointing out *inter alia* the extraordinary merits of Carlyle both as the vicarious autobiographer (so to speak) of his hero, and as the elucidator and scholiast of the documents with which he deals. Few editors, probably, have accomplished the drudgery of their calling with greater repugnance than Carlyle did, and the fact adds to the lustre of his success. Mr. Traill also adds some remarks on the curiously unscientific "standpoint of preconception" which Carlyle took up towards his subject, and which—still more unscientifically—he never thought fit to abandon. But, as a matter of art merely, that was all the better for the book.

Mr. Fisher Unwin announces for next Tuesday the new "Life of Sir Henry Parkes," by Mr. Charles E. Lyne—a book stated to be written "as one writes of a hero," and based on personal friendship and the knowledge of events which the editor of one of the great daily papers of Sydney must necessarily possess. The book covers forty years of the history of New South Wales, and independently of its uses as a biography—and Sir Henry Parkes is a very interesting figure—it should be of high value as a contribution to a department of history of which most Englishmen know nothing at all. Mr. Unwin also announces a volume of social satire in the form of a Herodotean description of contemporary manners, entitled "In an Ancient Mirror," by Mr. Flowerden.—Messrs. Cassell & Company promise the first volume of an extensively illustrated "Church of England: a History for the People," by the Very Rev. the Dean of Gloucester; the first part of a new fine art work—in celebration, we need hardly say, of the coming Jubilee—entitled "The Queen's Empire," and describing the government and administration of the Empire and the occupations of its members; and several new novels, including "My Lord Duke," by E. W. Hornung; "A Story-Teller's Pack," by Frank Stockton; and a new romance of Covenanting days by Mr. W. G. Tarbet, a young Scotch writer, which is reported to contain some spirited fighting, and is called "Ill-Gotten Gold."—Mr. Grant Richards has published a collection of sketches of native life in the Malay Peninsula, "In Court and Kampong," by Mr. Hugh Clifford, British Resident in Pahang. It ought to be a useful aid to our knowledge of a country to which, in spite of Mr. Henry Norman, we do not yet pay half enough attention.

OBITUARY.

Friedrich Franz III., Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, was one of a line of sovereigns whose attributes are paradoxical even for Germany. They are a Slav family ruling over Germans, and their principality is a despotism forming part of an empire which possesses universal suffrage. — Mr. Daniel Voorhees, United States' Senator from Indiana for the twenty years preceding the expiration of the last Congress, and previously a representative of the State for some fifteen years in the Lower House, had made a name for himself as a politician and orator, and was a strong Silverite and Inflationist.—Sir Walter de Souza had been Consul-General for Portugal in Calcutta, and had represented Westminster as a Moderate in the County Council since 1895.—Professor E. D. Cope, of the Pennsylvania University, had done much admirable geological, palæontological, and zoological work in connection with the survey of the Far West of America.—Mr. G. W. Godfrey was an able dramatic satirist of contemporary manners, whose fame would probably have been greater had his plays been more numerous.—Dr. G. M. Garrett, the University organist at Cambridge, had achieved a considerable reputation as a composer of ecclesiastical music.

THE CONCERT OF EUROPE.

WHATEVER the critics of the Concert of Europe may have to say in disparagement of that body, and we have never denied that a great deal that is very damaging may be said about it, there is at least one strong point to be scored to its credit. We have to thank the Concert of Europe, and it alone, for the fact that war did not break out immediately after the Greek raid into Turkish territory. We love the Turk a great deal less than some of the enthusiasts who are now shouting most loudly on behalf of Greece do. From our point of view, the Ottoman Empire is a blot upon the surface of the civilised world, and its speedy disappearance is an object to be aimed at by every friend of the human race. But even a Turk is entitled to have justice and a fair judgment upon his deeds. That being the case, it must in fairness be admitted that the forbearance which the Turks have shown in Macedonia in face of the provocation they have received from the Greek irregulars is almost superhuman. What is the reason of that forbearance to which alone we are indebted for the postponement of the dreaded war? It cannot be said that it is due to any sudden access of virtue on the part of Turkey. Its sole cause is the pressure exercised by the Powers—in other words, by the Concert of Europe. In these circumstances, it strikes us that English statesmen might possibly be better employed than in pouring anathemas upon those who, whatever may have been their defects, have at least rendered a very signal service, not only to Europe in general, but to Greece in particular. The Concert of Europe is a very defective and a very inefficient instrument. So much as this we admit freely. It deserves many of the hard things which have been said of it by Sir William Harcourt, and by many less distinguished exponents of public opinion. But we trust that the Liberal party, when it is weighing the Concert in the balance, will not omit to consider two points. The first is, that, bad as it is, the Concert has done some good in connection with recent events. The second is, that those who abuse it most fiercely have never made the slightest attempt to show us where we may find a better instrument for settling a great and difficult question without having recourse to unlimited blood-letting.

Until some of the assailants of the Concert have satisfied us with regard to the latter point, and are able to show us where something better than that Concert is to be found, it must continue to hold the field, and no amount of speech-making against it will really deprive it of its justification for existing. We confess that we cannot find in the recent utterances of prominent men any proof of the fact that they have a settled policy which they would substitute for that of the European Concert. Everybody will sympathise with Sir William Harcourt's vigorous protests against the employment of the forces of Great Britain for the purpose of coercing Greece in the interests of Turkey. But if the idea of such coercion was ever seriously entertained, it was abandoned long ago. Greece may very properly be coerced under certain conditions in the interests of peace and civilisation, but never in the interests of Turkey. It does not seem, therefore, that mere protests against a policy which is never likely to be seriously proposed to

us will lead us much nearer to a solution of the problem. No doubt there is something more positive in the affirmation by some members of the Liberal party that it is not only our duty not to coerce Greece, but to apply coercion of a very rigorous kind to Turkey. The general inclination of most of us is to coerce the Turk, and Heaven knows that he has afforded us in the past abundant justification for doing so. Our own deep regret is that coercion was not applied to him long ago, when he was caught red-handed in the midst of his sins. But if we are to be asked to coerce him now, when he is not the aggressor, but the victim of a very distinct act of aggression, we confess that we should like to know on what grounds of international law we can take this course, unless we proclaim ourselves the open allies of Greece and declare war upon the Sultan. Now, if there is one thing that seems to be settled in the policy of the extreme Greek party in this country—the party which we may take Mr. Labouchere to represent in the House of Commons, and the *Daily Chronicle* in the press—it is that England is not herself to engage in war on behalf of the Greeks. This seems to us to be the fatal weakness of the position of our Philhellenes, and it is difficult to reconcile its existence with that passionate sympathy with the Greek cause which they proclaim so loudly. Still, we must face the facts as they are, and we gather from them that there is no intention on the part of any responsible body in this country to advocate the expenditure of English blood and treasure in the cause of Greece.

What, then, remains for England to do? We are told that we must step aside from the Concert of Europe, because we cannot have absolutely our own way in that Concert, and the great names of Canning and Palmerston are invoked to remind us of the shame we incur in allowing our own policy and actions to be influenced in any degree by the opinions of others. To this we must reply that if it were true, as some assert, that England is at this moment a passive instrument in the hands of the Czar and the German Emperor—that is to say, of the two autocrats of the Continent—every instinct of our race would lead us to revolt from such a degradation. But so far no evidence whatever of this charge has been forthcoming. It is quite true that some of the proposals made by Russia and Germany have been accepted by the Concert, including England; but, on the other hand, we know that this country has rejected several proposals emanating from the same quarter, and that, as a consequence of this rejection of her suggestions by Great Britain, Germany is now practically standing aloof from the deliberations of the Concert. Is it not reasonable to suggest that if Great Britain had taken no part in the Concert, the proceedings of that body might have been very different, and much more inimical to the interests of Crete and Greece than they have been? If now we were to abandon the Concert without at the same time making it clear that we were prepared to espouse the cause of Greece with all the forces of our fleet and our army, is there anybody who really believes that we should be conferring a benefit upon the Greeks by doing so? No one can deny the truth of the charges which have been brought against the European Concert on the score of its inefficiency, its clumsiness, its timidity, and its woeful lack of statesmanship. Sir William Harcourt cried aloud for a new Canning on Tuesday. There is no Canning, no Palmerston, no Bismarck in the European Concert. But if such men are not to be found among the active statesmen of Europe at the present day, the world will have to do without them, and will have to make the best of such ministers and leaders of parties as it possesses. Yet not even this lack of statesmanlike leadership and the deplorable deficiencies of the European Concert would justify us in abandoning the policy which binds us to it, until we have had set before us, in clear and definite outline, another policy that can take its place, and bring us by more rapid steps to the end at which we believe all are aiming.

LOOKING BACK.

WHEN the House of Commons rose at three o'clock on Tuesday morning something more than the first part of the Session was over. So far as practical politics are concerned there is almost an end of the Session itself. There may yet be important debates on foreign and colonial affairs, especially if Mr. Chamberlain's colleagues do not sit upon his head. But the House of Commons has seldom been so apparently lifeless and indifferent to the conflict of parties and the strife of tongues. The Ministerial majority is so enormous that no division excites the faintest interest beforehand, nor produces the slightest effect afterwards. Mr. Balfour continues to blunder. But even he cannot blunder enough to lose votes, and unless he loses votes he will remain where he is. He saved his bacon, if so vulgar a phrase may be applied to so exquisite a personality, by carrying the Education Act for the relief of Anglican subscribers without any amendment. He has thus, in the opinion of his more foolish admirers, redeemed the great failure of 1896. Intelligent critics, to whom the First Lord of the Treasury gives a very wide berth, perceive that the precedent must be disastrous to sound Parliamentary procedure. No Government has hitherto pretended to be infallible. All Governments have acknowledged that framing Bills was a difficult task, and that the stage of Committee was useful for improving them. In future, if Mr. Balfour's example is followed by himself and others, it will be a sign of weakness in any Government to accept amendments, and a point of honour to do without them. This more than half destroys the House of Commons and reduces the Opposition to impotence. A Government with a majority could almost always carry the second readings of Bills. But the strongest Governments have yielded to argument in Committee because, though strong, they were not unreasonable, and because it was an honourable rule of public life to recognise some rights in a minority. Mr. Balfour has changed all that. He has the utmost contempt for custom and tradition, for precedents and understandings. He never looks an inch beyond his nose. So long as he can get out of the particular mess in which he happens at the moment to be, he gives no thought to the ultimate consequences of his actions. When he was leader of a minority he gave as a reason for not passing a Bill the fact that it had come back from a Standing Committee without amendment. That was going too far in one direction. He has now made up for that error by going too far in another.

On the last of the sixty sittings which the House of Commons held before Easter the Leader of the House gave two illustrations of his curious unfitness for his post. In the first place he crammed the order-paper with such a crowd of small Bills that the House was kept up till three in the morning, and one Scotch measure was driven by main force through a somnolent Assembly. This grotesque parody of legislation is rather a favourite with Mr. Balfour. The other illustration was smaller, but even more characteristic. Mr. Bainbridge asked a

question, of which he had given "private notice," about the conditions entitling a denominational school to be considered necessitous. There is something to be said against private notice as a substitute for putting a question down in writing so that it may be subsequently printed. But the point is this: the notice was perfectly intelligible to anyone familiar, first with the Act, and secondly with the minutes of the Education Department. Mr. Balfour could make neither head nor tail of it. It conveyed no idea to his mind, and he frankly said so. The incident throws a most instructive light upon the spirit in which Mr. Balfour took up the Denominational Schools. He neither knew nor cared anything about the subject. But he was determined that he would make the Dissenters endow the Clerical schools and avenge his defeat of the year before. Having done this, he has lost all interest in the matter, and will not even take the trouble to read the regulations for administering the Act. He deserves no credit for getting the Bill through Committee intact, or, rather, he would deserve none even if the process were in itself desirable. This task, as interpreted and applied by the present Chairman of Ways and Means, is an almost childishly simple one. The Leader of the House, the Minister in charge of a Bill, or for that matter anybody else, has only to move at any time that the remainder of the clause then under discussion be added to the Bill forthwith. There may be any number of important amendments awaiting discussion. That makes no difference. They are all ruthlessly swept away. Not a word can be said upon any one of them. They cannot even be put from the Chair. They are as though they had never been. We affirm without hesitation that if Mr. Gladstone had been able to make such motions on the Home Rule Bill, it could have been carried through Committee without fixing any limit of time. But, rightly or wrongly, Mr. Mellor intimated that he should regard such tactics as an abuse of the closure.

While, therefore, Mr. Balfour has avoided the failure of 1896, he has not increased his reputation as a statesman or as a man of business. He has made some clever and even brilliant speeches. But the best parts of them have had no reference to the subject before the House. He cannot be made to understand a Bill. Supply is unusually forward, and there can be no doubt that the practice of always taking it on Fridays ensures the first condition of rapid progress, an empty House. No fresh Parliamentary reputations have been hitherto made this year. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his speech on Irish finance, confirmed the position he had already gained for mastery of his subject and power in debate. But he has spoken very seldom. Mr. Curzon, who has spoken very often, is turgid rather than lucid, and bombastic rather than eloquent. Mr. Brodrick, in defending the liability of the Guards to foreign service, rose above his previous level and achieved a remarkable success. Sir William Harcourt is, since the retirement of Mr. Gladstone, by far the greatest political personage in the House of Commons. His superiority to Mr. Balfour, and to Mr. Chamberlain, who has for him been wonderfully silent, consists chiefly in a thorough knowledge of political history and of international law. Mr. Asquith's speech on the third reading of the Sectarian Schools Bill was one of the best, we should be inclined to say quite the best, he has ever made. But his Parliamentary reputation is already so high that it could not without wider opportunities be increased. Sir Frank Lockwood has shown for the first time as a debater the great qualities long recognised in him as an advocate. Mr. Bryce, at a public dinner where Lord Salisbury presided, paid a graceful tribute to the oratory of Lord Hugh Cecil, the Prime Minister's son. But the substance of Lord Hugh's speeches, which read like old sermons, is not on a level with their style. Sir Henry Fowler's searching criticism of the scheme for endowing the parsons' schools with the people's money was developed in his best manner, and no man in the House of Commons is more effective either as a critic or as an expositor. Mr. Acland, now completely restored to health, fought the Bill with courageous persistency. But, of course, it was all of no use for the moment, though it will not have been lost upon the country. Mr. Balfour did not understand what Mr. Acland was talking about, and the majority did not care. The Opposition are simply ignored. They must bide their time and talk to the constituencies rather than to the Treasury Bench.

THE IRISH BOARD OF AGRICULTURE.

THE Bill which Mr. Gerald Balfour introduced on Monday night is a disheartening example of the impossibilities of English government in Ireland. Without Government aid of any kind a number of independent Irish gentlemen of all parties came together at the invitation of Mr. Horace Plunkett, inquired with care and knowledge into the agricultural needs of Ireland, despatched commissioners of singular ability to foreign countries like Denmark and Würtemberg, and produced an absolutely unanimous Report. The Report secured the assent of the vastly greater part of the newspapers and politicians of both England and Ireland, though it would not be true to say that the assent was unanimous, for our contemporary the *Freeman's Journal* handled the Report severely, and was, as we thought, somewhat unreasonably angry with THE SPEAKER for supporting the proposals of the Recess Committee. We venture to think, however, that we expressed the views of most Irishmen, as well as Englishmen, when we welcomed the Report as a guide towards some economic amelioration of Irish conditions, and also as an important means of securing that co-operation between different classes in Ireland which—whether Home Rule comes or does not come—is the principal social need of the country. Mr. Gerald Balfour was furnished by the Report with an unexampled opportunity. Most Chief Secretaries have complained of the want of practical guidance from Irish opinion, but he could carry out one practical reform at least on which Unionists and Nationalists were agreed. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, enjoying an enormous surplus, was not likely to be chary of the necessary financial means. There was really no practical difficulty to prevent the experiment getting a fair chance.

We still hope that the opportunity will not be lost, and that the Bill may be amended so as to secure the support of Irish members. But, frankly, after the reception which it got last Monday night, we cannot feel sanguine. Mr. Balfour seems to have run on no less than three rocks, any one of which might sink his ship. In the first place he has shown the usual English distrust of Irish popular control. The Conservatives upon the Recess Committee thought it essential that the new Board or Department should obtain the support of the people. They were naturally a little puzzled to find a way of introducing the popular element, for in Ireland, as we all know, there is less representative local government than in Russia. But they suggested that the Consultative Council, through which the Board was to work, should be

two-thirds elective, and made other proposals of the same kind. Mr. Gerald Balfour has left the constitution of the Consultative Council to be settled, with the approval of the Lord Lieutenant, by the Board appointed by the Lord Lieutenant. We can see how this would work out by referring to another part of the Bill, which gives the Grand Jury power to levy a rate for the purposes of the Act. The Grand Jury consists of landlords; the rate which it levies is paid by the occupiers; and one can hardly imagine a more silly device to render agricultural co-operation unpopular than to give the landlords power to tax their tenants for purposes of agricultural improvement as to which the tenants had not been consulted. Neither in Ireland nor in any other country can co-operation be superimposed from above. The excellent work done by Mr. Horace Plunkett has mainly resulted from the active aid which he secured from all classes.

In the second place, the Chief Secretary has not dared to seriously disturb the existing departments in Dublin Castle. The Recess Committee demanded a powerful Board, possessing all the administrative functions relating to agriculture now exercised by various authorities, and many new ones in addition. This is just what Mr. Balfour has not done. He sets up an Agricultural Board, not popularly elected, but appointed by the Lord Lieutenant, and containing among its twelve members the Chief Secretary, the new Parliamentary Vice-President, and the Agricultural Commissioner, who is to be chief permanent official. But he is apparently alarmed lest this body should turn out a regular Committee of Public Safety. It may be brought to an end at any moment by a resolution of both Houses of Parliament, while even before its dissolution it is to possess as little power as possible. The Fishery Commissioners are to remain as they are; the Land Commission is to lose only a few of its lesser functions; and though the Veterinary Department of the Privy Council is to be abolished, the work is to be transferred not to the Board, but to the three official members of the Board, and the office of Assistant Under-Secretary, which was created for the purposes of the Veterinary Department, is to flourish as of yore. If the nine non-official members of the Board are to be fit for anything, they ought to be fit to muzzle dogs and to order cattle affected with foot-and-mouth disease to be slaughtered. Mr. Balfour probably believes they would do the work perfectly well. But he does not dare to suggest that any of the higher officials in the Castle should be asked to come under the more energetic control of the new Board. In some cases he leaves to these officials work which the Board obviously ought to do; in other cases he leaves the officials in undisturbed enjoyment of their salaries after the Board has taken over the work. This, as Mr. Carson truly said, is the old, old story of Irish departmental reorganisations.

In the third place, Mr. Balfour has been unhappy enough to introduce the financial relations question into the discussion of the Recess Committee's Report. He proposes that the Agricultural Board shall derive its resources from what is called the equivalent grant to Ireland, being nine-eightieths of the English Agricultural Rating grant of last year. Now, Irishmen unanimously believe that nine-eightieths, while it may represent their contribution to the revenue, is not anything like a fair equivalent to the payment of half the rates by the State. Irish agricultural rates are much higher than those in England, partly owing to the greater relative cost of road maintenance in a poorer country, and partly owing to the large proportion of paupers and lunatics left behind by the tide of emigration. They are roughly about 4s. in the £ as against 2s. 2d. in England, and as the valuation of Irish agricultural land is admitted by the Government to exceed £9,000,000, it would take £900,000 to pay half the rates, whereas £150,000 is the sum actually devoted to Irish purposes. Take, for instance, the farmer in Donegal, where the rates are about 5s. in the £. If he lived in Westmorland, as some of his rivals who produce store cattle for the same markets do, he would benefit to the extent of half-a-crown for every pound of his valuation, or roughly by twelve-and-six for each saleable store beast. But because Donegal is not an English county he is to go on paying his rates in full, and is only to be aided in his competition against the bounty-fed English cattle by the ministrations of a Board in Dublin. On Unionist principles this is absolutely indefensible, and we are not surprised that every member representing an Irish constituency who spoke last Monday—even Mr. Arnold-Forster—protested against it. Mr. Gerald Balfour has made three very bad mistakes: we only trust that during the Easter recess he and his colleagues may become conscious of their error and promise amendment.

THE CLAIM OF THE GIRL GRADUATE.

LAST year the University of Oxford had a great opportunity, and lost it. It does not often get ahead of Cambridge in introducing educational reforms; but this time it seemed likely to do so, and its legislature deliberately refused the chance. Women students, who were established at Cambridge long before they had effected a lodgment at Oxford, found that their prospects of earning their living were injured by the fact that, though they could take the degree examinations, they could not be hall-marked by the degree. They asked, therefore, for that formal recognition which should put them on a level, in competition for appointments as teachers, with graduates of excellent but—it is no harm to them to say it—less adequate educational institutions, such as Victoria University and the University of London. However, the congregation of the University of Oxford decided otherwise, partly on the old grounds which most people must be sick of hearing about, and partly on the new and much more plausible ground that women students are better off as they are—unfettered by the regulations of the degree course—than they would be if subjected to the constant drive and grind which oppresses, and in some degree cramps and injures the abler and more original men among the undergraduates. Now it is the turn of Cambridge; and the controversy over the proposals discussed last term by the Senate of the University has waxed warm in the columns of the *Times*. Professor Case and Mr. Strachan-Davidson conduct it from Oxford—fearing that Cambridge may set an example which will compel Oxford to "go one better"; and Mr. Henry Sidgwick, Mrs. Henry Sidgwick, Mr. W. C. Sidgwick, and Professor Westlake have replied on behalf of Cambridge and progress, while Professor Allbutt deprecates an influx of "low honour-women," or "poll-women," and the Bishop of Stepney proposes a compromise. Let Oxford and Cambridge, he says, combine to promote the foundation of a women's university which will "confer degrees on women who have passed examinations at Cambridge or Oxford or any other university of the British Empire" (perhaps requiring some complementary studies), absorb Holloway College, and

by-and-by, we suppose, discover the ideal course of education for the female intellect.

For this compromise we do not see that there is anything to be said, except that it relieves Oxford and Cambridge of an inconvenient question and of some rather foolish talk. Nobody now, we believe, rates an *ad eundem* degree very high *per se;* and in some of the cases where a man migrates from one University to another to qualify for an appointment, the institution is distinctly liable to abuse. Nor is it desirable that a University should be a mere examining board either for all its members —like the present University of London—or for part of them, like the University of Dublin. But this proposed Diamond Jubilee University for women is to begin by being a collection of women with *ad eundem* degrees *plus* an examining board. Then it is to adjust somehow the relative values of various courses of study pursued elsewhere, which is the difficulty that has upset one scheme for remodelling the University of London, and may upset another; and meanwhile, it is to set about adjusting its courses to the capacity of the abstract female intellect—of which figment more anon. Such a scheme is wanted by nobody—except those who wish merely to shunt the problem; the resultant University could not compete with Victoria, or the London University — even as it is — or the University of Wales; and nobody would know, for several years at least, what its degrees were really worth. So we are left with the question: Are qualified women students who pass the degree examinations and comply with the regulations for degrees to be hall-marked with the letters B.A. or not? For the proposal there are two main arguments. The first—which appeals to those who know the ways of governing bodies of schools more strongly than it does to University men, who know that the real value of the mere degree is very various and may be infinitesimal —is that the world at large puts an exaggerated value on degrees, and thinks that a woman who can describe herself as B.A. of anywhere is *ipso facto* very greatly superior to anyone not so stamped. Thus a pass B.A. (Lond.) counts for more than a place among Cambridge wranglers; and it is more practicable to fall in with the popular view than to try and enlighten it. The other argument, now put forward at Cambridge, is that women have now some University privileges by courtesy which they would like to be secured to them as rights. Of course this suggests "the thin end of the wedge," and accordingly Professor Case and Mr. Strachan-Davidson protest—Professor Case in particular—that the change means "a mixed University," the undermining of classical education, and the assimilation of male education to female and of female to male.

We need not deal in detail with the effective replies of the three representatives of the Sidgwick family and Professor Westlake; but we may concisely answer the contention of the opponents of the change thus. If Oxford and Cambridge ever become mixed Universities, the change will come as part of that revolution in the social relations of the sexes which —in spite of the fact that the Women's Franchise Bill has passed its second reading—is as far off now as it was twenty years ago. But whatever harm is to be done by the admixture of female influence in University towns has already been done long ago. Think of the Oxford of Tom Brown or of Verdant Green, neither of whom ever spoke to a lady in Oxford except during Commemoration, or of the Oxford of a century and a quarter ago, when there were about a dozen reigning belles or "toasts"—mostly daughters of married Heads—whose charms were celebrated in appropriate verse by Bachelors of Arts; and then think of Oxford as it is to-day, with a society in the Parks like that of Cheltenham, balls all term time, a man's people—or his friends' people—up all the Summer Term, and apparently most of the other terms as well. What further disturbance could any possible influx of lady students produce? In Cambridge there is less outside society to distract the men, but there is plenty of distraction nevertheless. And yet men to-day at both Universities do much more work than they did either in 1750 or in 1845-50. Finally, Professor Case and some other people seem to imagine that there is a special type of "feminine intellect." Experience does not bear out this view. There are plenty of types of feminine character, but the intellect—or that part of it which learns lessons—is no part of the differentiation of them. Women students, as everybody knows who has had personal experience of them, are very like men students. Perhaps, indeed, there may be less variety and less range of thought among them; but they do everything that males do, and do it in much the same way. They have beaten the males, of course. But as to striking out lines for themselves, they have studied exactly what men do—both before their degree examinations and after them. As to abolishing classics (as Professor Case fears), the only risk is that they may rivet the chains of classical tradition more firmly on their own necks than men would venture to do. It is not women who think that certain subjects alone are "suitable for a lady." It is those male teachers who have not taught women. To those who have done so, female students—now, as in the days of Plato—are like the females of other animals: very like the males, only not quite so strong.

FINANCE.

THE crossing of the Turkish frontier by a Greek irregular force on Saturday last caused a sharp fall upon the Continental Bourses, which reacted upon the Stock Exchange. As, however, the Greek Government disclaims responsibility for the advance, and the Turkish Government has not retaliated, the belief is very general that peace will somehow be maintained. In the City, in spite of the apprehension that exists, the best informed have all along maintained that war would be avoided. Partly, perhaps, the opinion is founded upon the mere fact that hostile operations have been so long delayed, but, mainly, it is based upon the knowledge by the great financial houses that the Russian Government is not prepared for war; that, in fact, it is negotiating at the present moment in Berlin for another loan. French investors hold such a large amount of Russian bonds that, for the time being, at all events, they are not willing to buy more; and the Bourse has suffered severely during the past year and a half, and therefore is not in a condition to float another Russian issue. But if Russia is not prepared, the City concludes that no other Power is likely to break the peace. The dulness of business, owing to the political situation, is intensified this week by the approach of the Easter holidays; practically, it may be said that hardly anything is doing. It is remarkable, at the same time, how well the home trade keeps up. No doubt it will suffer in the early future to some small extent if the new American Tariff Bill is passed. Indeed, already American orders have been completely stopped. The Indian famine too has had some effect upon Lancashire. But allowing for political anxieties, for hostile tariffs, and for famine and drought, it is wonderful how little the home trade has been affected. And even the foreign trade as yet has not suffered very much. The Argentine market for such a time is fairly well maintained, but

Uruguayan Securities are much depressed by the success of the insurgents. Brazilians are likewise depressed, and there is very little inclination to buy United States Securities of any kind. The appointment of Commissioners apparently to reopen the Behring Sea Fishery Case has made a bad impression upon the market, and joined with all the other influences is likely to prevent European investors from buying American Stocks. Home Securities are well maintained, and even this week, with the holidays close upon us, there is some investment in Home Railway Stocks. But the Mining Market has been deserted, and the South African Mining Market in particular is more depressed and more lifeless than ever, especially the securities in any way connected with the Gold Fields of South Africa and the East Rand Proprietary Company. The Gold Fields, it will be recollected, is one of the companies of which Mr. Rhodes was managing director, and it was used for the importation and storing of arms. There is a fear, therefore, that President Kruger may confiscate its concession. Altogether, the state of things in South Africa is most discouraging, although the City still hopes that peace will be maintained.

An attempt is being made by bankers and discount houses to keep up the rates of interest and discount, but with very little success. As observed above, the Russian Government is negotiating in Berlin for a new loan, and, if it succeeds, the probability is that it will withdraw gold from this market. The Austrian Government is likewise actively buying gold, and the Japanese Government has been buying for some time. With all these demands for gold there is a feeling that rates are too low; that if political apprehensions increase the drain of gold may become large, and that, consequently, the reserve of the Bank of England may be reduced. But, in spite of all this, rates will continue low, for speculation is completely paralysed and new enterprise is utterly stopped. In India the Money Market remains as before, and there is no sign of any material reduction of rates very soon. Of course by-and-by there must be some decline in rates, but it looks as if the supply of loanable capital will be so small that the decline will not be anything like so great as it usually is in the summer season.

By the death of Mr. Bliss some time ago, and of Mr. Grenfell somewhat later, the well-known City firm of Morton, Rose & Co. was dissolved. A new limited liability company consisting of the partners of the old firm has been formed to take over the assets of the firm, and this week it has offered for subscription £400,000 of 4½ per cent. debentures at the issue price of 98½, the debentures to be redeemable at par in ten years. The debentures or their proceeds are part of the price of the assets of the old firm, and, furthermore, £400,000 of ordinary shares are given to the old firm. In the prospectus the list is set out showing that the assets consist of somewhat under £400,000, comprising United States, Canadian, South American and other securities quoted either in London or in New York, and somewhat over £400,000 in other securities not quoted, but which are valued by Messrs. Morton, Rose & Co. It is stated that the income derived from these assets is more than sufficient to pay the interest upon the debentures.

THIS MORNING'S PAPER.

By a Mere Outsider.

SATURDAY.—The fighting on the Macedonian frontier yesterday once more upsets the calculations of those who believed that peace was assured. It is too soon to discuss the precise importance of this incident, but two things are clear. The first is that whilst the Concert is moving on as clumsily and slowly as some huge mammoth of prehistoric times, any one of the matches which have been scattered about by reckless hands may occasion a terrific explosion. The second conclusion is that no excuse whatever can be offered for the men who were the aggressors in this engagement. Not even the most ardent of the friends of Greece will dare to defend their act of criminal lunacy.

The sensation of the moment is, however, not the Greek Question, but the South African inquiry. Sir John Willoughby and Dr. Jameson both "climbed down" in a rather laborious fashion yesterday, and if we only had their evidence to depend upon we should be brought to the conclusion that all the talk about the complicity of Lord Rosmead and the Colonial Secretary in the revolutionary movement in the Transvaal was idle gossip. But the talk continues, and it is said confidently that we are upon the eve of grave revelations. "Wait till the telegrams are published," is now the cry of those who by nod and wink seek to convey the insinuation that there is still something astounding to come out. I suppose that the telegrams will be produced when Mr. Harris appears before the Committee after Easter. It has been an act of grave indiscretion on the part of certain persons to throw obstacles in the way of the production of these telegrams. Their action has very nearly led to the violent disruption of the Committee itself.

Sunday.—The holidays have practically begun, and so large a number of politicians have already left town that it looks as if to-morrow night's debate on the crisis will hardly be as imposing as the importance of the subject demands. The demonstration to-day in Hyde Park was only moderately successful so far as numbers were concerned, though there was enough of enthusiasm. The truth is that the fighting on the Macedonian frontier has disturbed everybody. We do not know yet how far it is a serious piece of work, but the mere fact that Greeks were the aggressors is a staggering blow to the hopes of peace. This false move on the part of the Hellenes has once more given the Turk the advantage. That worthy gentleman must see in the ardent "forward party" of Europe his best friends and most efficient allies.

Monday.—If the statement of the *Daily Chronicle* as to the conferring of a Jubilee peerage upon Lord Lorne should prove to be correct, there ought to be an exceedingly interesting contest in Manchester. Lord Lorne captured his present seat by a very small majority at the last General Election, his opponent being Sir Henry Roscoe. There is no doubt that if it had not been for the effect of the general wave of Tory reaction which swept over the country in 1895 Sir Henry would have kept the seat. Many things have happened since 1895, and some of these things ought to have a very direct bearing upon the state of political feeling in Manchester. It is to be hoped that if a vacancy occurs Sir Henry Roscoe may be induced to stand again. He has been universally missed in the present House of Commons, and his return to it would be hailed with pleasure by men of both parties.

Mr. Goschen's jingo speech on Saturday at the dinner to Sir Alfred Milner is not calculated to reassure those who look with keen apprehension upon the state of things in South Africa. It is clear that there is a section in the Ministry that favours a treatment of the Transvaal Question that is only too likely to lead to war. On the other hand, however, it is said that the peace party in the Cabinet is still stronger than this bellicose section, and that there is a fixed determination on their side that nothing shall be done that might lead to a war in this Jubilee year of the Queen's reign. Unfortunately, wars sometimes happen despite the strenuous efforts of Cabinets to prevent them, and they are apt to break out at very untoward seasons.

I hear that the German Emperor had really intended to be present at the Jubilee celebrations in June, and that he is not over-well pleased at the

Queen's decision not to invite any reigning sovereigns on that occasion. His first intention, as he could not come himself, was to send as his representative a Prince who would hardly have been the most acceptable guest at the English Court; but the Queen has intimated that she expects to receive her grandson Prince Henry as the German representative, and Prince Henry accordingly will come.

Tuesday.—Last night's debate in the House of Commons was just what had been anticipated. The "stalwarts" below the gangway on the Opposition side had their amendment and a thorough beating. Sir William Harcourt reviewed the situation in general terms, but did not press Ministers sufficiently hard to satisfy the advanced section of his followers. Mr. Curzon was oracular and Mr. Balfour angry, and the end of the whole business was that the question was left in precisely the same condition as it was in before the debate took place. It is, of course, clear that the slowness and clumsiness of the movements of the European Powers cause deep irritation even among those who have hitherto supported the Concert most strenuously. It is equally clear that the frontier situation—thanks to the action of the revolutionary party in Greece—is extremely dangerous. But perhaps the fact which is more clearly apparent than any other is the hollow—one might almost say the farcical—character of the diplomatic situation. Turkey and Greece are not at war; their representatives can still meet in friendly discussion, and both Governments are disclaiming any connection with events in Macedonia! The ordinary spectator of affairs is fairly bewildered by this condition of things. Dangerous as the crisis is it seems impossible to believe that any catastrophe may happen when there is so much of *opera bouffe* mixed up with the tragedy. However, the doors of Parliament are now shut, and our legislators have not been deterred from taking holiday by the state of foreign affairs. What is still more remarkable is the fact that Ministers have, one and all, deserted town and left the various crises now in progress in order to take holiday at a distance. It is certainly a curious reflection upon the value of Ministerial aid and guidance that at a moment like the present, when, both in the East and South Africa, we are confronted by such grave difficulties, we should have no Prime Minister, no Foreign Secretary, and no Colonial Secretary in London, or even in England. If a Radical Government had been in office under similar circumstances, what an outcry we should have had from the Opposition Press.

The announcement that Lord Rosebery has been asked to arbitrate in the case of the great dispute on the North-Eastern Railway will be hailed with pleasure by all who remember his services on the occasion of the coal strike some years ago. Of course, there are many of us who would rather see Lord Rosebery's knowledge and capacity employed in the larger affairs of his country, and who feel just as deeply as we did six months ago the extent of the loss which his retirement imposes upon us in such a crisis as the present; but inasmuch as his high sense of duty and his chivalrous bearing in all the affairs of life lead him scrupulously to refrain from embarrassing his old colleagues by interfering at present in the political questions in which he has played so great a part, it is a satisfaction to know that he can find other and possibly not less useful ways of serving his fellow-creatures without exciting the mean rancour of the baser kind of partisans.

Wednesday.—Sir William Harcourt's speech at the Eighty Club dinner last night has given more satisfaction to some at least of his followers than his utterances in the House of Commons on Monday evening afforded them. There was a great deal of grumbling among the "Forwards" on occasion, and their organ in the press hardly attempted to conceal its vexation. But the speech of last night, which was one of Sir William's best efforts in his own special vein, has excited them to enthusiasm. Whether it will have the same effect upon the party generally remains to be seen. It does not, unfortunately, give any definite lead upon the burning question of the hour. But no such leading has been offered to us now for some months past. What Sir William Harcourt did last night was to inspire his hearers with enthusiasm, and to accentuate that detestation of the Concert of Europe which seems to be the predominant note at present in Radical feeling.

I do not imagine that the story told in the *Daily Chronicle* this morning as to the defeat of the Alabama Treaty by the joint intrigues of Germany and Russia ought to be taken seriously. Certainly a charge more disgraceful could not have been brought against the American Senate than that which is conveyed in this story. Even the American writers of fiction who have painted the intrigues of Washington in the most lurid colours—as, for example, in the novel called "Juggernaut"—have never gone so far as to represent Senators as being the purchased agents of foreign Powers. I should imagine that if this story were true, the public sentiment of the United States would sweep the criminals into perdition. But though it is impossible to believe this particular story, there is no doubt that the *Chronicle* correspondent would not have forwarded it to this country if it had not been current in the United States, and the mere fact that such a tale should be repeated there is significant of the open disrepute into which the Senate has fallen.

Thursday.—Political London has emptied itself, and hardly a member of Parliament is to be seen in Pall Mall. Yesterday there was a good deal of talk among the politicians who still lingered in town regarding the situation, and it was surprising to find how greatly the current of popular feeling is changing. Hatred of the Sultan and sympathy with his oppressed subjects is as strong as ever; but the aggressive action of the Greeks has unquestionably subdued the fervour of Hellenic enthusiasm. Besides, it is now known that there is not the smallest risk of the forces of England being used against either Cretans or Greeks. All this tends to lower the political temperature. The hope still exists that peace may be preserved; but the want of courage and determination shown by the Great Powers as to the removal of the Turkish garrisons from Crete makes the issue very doubtful.

A good deal of curiosity is felt as to the character and composition of the "National Reform Union" which met at Manchester yesterday. By whom its members are elected, and what section of Liberalism they represent, are mysteries to those who are supposed to know most about Liberal organisation.

AN AUSTRIAN CRETE.

BOSNIA and the Hercegovina have for some years past been justly styled by Austrian writers "the pattern State of the Balkan Peninsula." But at the present moment the title is peculiarly appropriate; for, failing the immediate union of Crete to the Hellenic kingdom, an occupation of that distressful island somewhat on the analogy of the Austro-Hungarian occupation of Bosnia and the old Duchy of St. Sava, is generally regarded as the most desirable solution of the Cretan problem. And, indeed, the similarity between the two cases is very considerable. Of Turks properly so called there is not, and never was, in Bosnia and the Hercegovina, any considerable number. With the exception of a few Osmanli officials, who came and went with such rapidity that they never gained any real influence upon the people, the population of the two occupied provinces was, in Turkish times, mainly composed of one race — the Serbs. The Bosnian Mussulmans, like the Mussulmans of Crete, are of the same stock as the Christians, whom they despised. At the time of the Turkish conquest of Bosnia in 1463, a whole mass of Bosnian Christians, who had suffered terrible persecutions from the

Roman Catholics for their adherence to the Bogomile or Patarene heresy, flung themselves into the arms of the Sultan, Mahmoud II., preferring the turban of a mufti to the red hat of a cardinal. Under the Turkish rule, these converts to Islâm became the privileged caste. They preserved their feudal tenures undisturbed, they ground down their Christian fellow-countrymen with far greater cruelty than the Turks had shown towards the *rayahs* of Servia or Bulgaria; and such was their power that, until the time of the redoubtable Omar Pasha, himself a Christian renegade, they refused to allow the Turkish Governor to reside in Sarajevo for more than forty-eight hours at a time. Yet, like the Mussulman Greeks of Crete, these Mussulman Serbs of Bosnia were far more fanatical than the Turks themselves. Whenever a reforming Sultan, like Mahmoud II., attempted to establish something like religious equality, the Bosnian Begs were the first to raise the standard of revolt against their liege lord. One Sultan they branded as "the Giaour," and the present century witnessed the strange spectacle of Mussulman Serbs in arms against a Turkish ruler who was desirous to do some justice to their fellow-Serbs. People who travel through Bosnia and the Hercegovina nowadays in comfortable railway carriages, are apt to forget that even as late as 1878 the Bosniaks were quite as wild and ungovernable as the Cretans of to-day. When the British plenipotentiaries had persuaded the Berlin Congress to entrust Austria-Hungary with the task of occupying these two provinces, Mehemet Ali, one of the Turkish representatives, consoled himself by the observation that Turkey had never been able to do anything with a people so savage, and that Austria-Hungary could not hope to be more fortunate. Such a remark seems incredible to those who know Bosnia and the Hercegovina as they are to-day. Nineteen brief years have utterly disproved Mehemet Ali's assertion, and to-day the mountains of "lofty Bosnia" and the stony fastnesses of the Hercegovina are as safe as Piccadilly, and much more respectable. Is it too much to hope that Crete under a similar system of government, having as it has similar social conditions and a similar history, would produce similar results?

Perhaps the most striking effect of the Austrian rule is the entire cessation of that religious fanaticism, which was the curse of the country alike under the Bosnian *Bans* and kings and under the Turkish rule. Turn over the pages of Klaić, the great Croatian historian of the country, and you find one religious persecution after another. In fact, the famous line of Lucretius, *Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum*, might be taken as the epitome of Bosnia's grim annals down to the Austrian occupation. Yet now, the Catholics, the Orthodox Serbs, the Spanish Jews, and the Mussulman Bosniaks live at peace one with another, and with "the occupation," as the Austrian garrison is called. Last summer I played tennis at Maglaj, a lovely little town on the banks of the yellow Bosna, with a Mussulman Beg and a number of Austrian officers, all on the very best of terms with each other. Yet within a stone's throw of the tennis-ground was the quiet cemetery, where rest the bones of the Austrian hussars who were treacherously shot down by the fanatical Mussulmans of this very town when the Austrian troops were advancing to Sarajevo in 1878. To-day the mayor of Sarajevo, a most able and cultivated man, who has brought out a volume of quaint Bosnian proverbs, is a Mussulman. Yet the hills round the capital are covered with the graves of men who fell in the defence of the town by the fanatic, Hadži Loja, in August, 1878. Nowadays every creed has full liberty under the ægis of the Austro-Hungarian Administration. The Mussulmans have their splendid new *Scheriat Schule*, where lawyers are trained. No one interferes with the dances of the Dervishes; no one hinders the devotions of Orthodox pope, Catholic priest, or strangely weird *muezzin*, as he drones his evensong from his snow-white minaret. The Mussulman women still go about more closely veiled than at Constantinople; yet no Austrian soldier ever molests them. Meanwhile, the material prosperity of the land has immensely increased. At the time of the occupation there was only one railway in the country—the bit of line as far as Banjaluka, which will one day unite Western Europe with Salonica, and make Bosnia a resting-place on the road to India. But now a line of rails connects Bosna-Brod in the north with Sarajevo, while a continuation of the same railway traverses the wildest part of the Hercegovina, and links Sarajevo with Mostar and the Dalmatian town of Metković on the Narenta. There are branch lines as well to Jajce, the ancient capital of the Bosnian kings, and to Dolnja Tuzla, a rapidly growing manufacturing town. And when the new line from the ancient city of Spalato on the Adriatic to the Bosnian station of Bugojno has been made, the trade of the country will be immensely improved. Then, too, Dalmatia will cease to be "a face without a head," and Bosnia "a head without a face"; the Dalmatian coast towns will find in the occupied provinces their natural *Hinterland*, and the occupied provinces will obtain a fine harbour, far better than Metković or Klek, at Spalato. As for the increasing trade and prosperity of the country under Western administration, those who visited the admirable Bosnian section of the Buda-Pesth Exhibition last year can testify to the progress achieved. All sorts of public works have been undertaken by the Austrian Administration—five Government hotels in the principal towns, a stud-farm and a sugar factory, salt works and a paper-mill, a school of fruit and vine culture near Mostar, and a Government school of design at Sarajevo. Baron von Kállay and his talented and popular wife have made at Ildže, just outside the capital, a health and pleasure resort, which can compare favourably with the spas of Germany and Austria. Within the last decade the population of the capital has increased by nearly one-half, while each year the Government grant for education grows bigger. Baron von Kállay may well be proud of his work, and no one who knows the country can doubt that he was right when he told the Budget Committee last year that "if the state of affairs existing prior to 1878 were to be suddenly restored, it would make the whole population thoroughly unhappy."

Not, indeed, that the Orthodox Serbs of Bosnia and the Hercegovina, any more than the Greek Christians of Crete, have forgotten their racial affinity with their fellow-Serbs of Servia and Montenegro. They still drone to the music of the *guzla* those melancholy Serb melodies, which tell of Knez Lazar and of the "King's son, Marko," of Kossovo's fatal field and of Branković's dastardly treachery. And in their leisure they dream still—for it is only a dream at present—of a "great Servia" which shall one day combine under a single head, as in the days of Tsar Dušan, the scattered members of the Serb race.

W. M.

A FOSSIL EVENING PAPER.

THE "ten thousandth" number of the *Pall Mall Gazette* has prompted Mr. Frederick Greenwood to some interesting recollections of that journal's beginnings. The idea of an evening paper addressed, as the prospectus said, to "educated men and women," was Mr. Greenwood's; the title, to which that gentleman strongly objected, was Mr. George Smith's. Thackeray's publisher was enamoured of the name given by the author of "Pendennis" to the journal which Captain Shandon, in his famous prospectus, declared to be "written by gentlemen for gentlemen." For that very reason Mr. Greenwood dreaded the association. "The title was not my choice. I thought it trivial; feared that it would be 'chaffed'; felt that a meaning

of snobbishness clung to it still." There was no snobbishness in the first number of the *Pall Mall*—which has been reprinted as a curiosity—but there is an overpowering suggestion of "educated men and women." This little sheet does not contain a line which the average reader of evening papers to-day would look at. There are columns of Sir Arthur Helps—a dialogue in his most ponderous manner on the subject of "Waste." There is number one of the "Letters of Sir Pitt Crawley," written by Sir Reginald Palgrave, now Clerk of the House of Commons. Sir Reginald's present labours are distinctly more harmonious with his genius than these epistolary excursions into humour. A paper entitled "Ladies at Law" came from John Ormsby, translator of "Don Quixote," "a humourist" ("not blazingly so, however, in this particular article," adds Mr. Greenwood). In short, the appeal to "educated men and women" in this first number appears to have assumed that education demanded a very stodgy kind of provender. In subsequent numbers Mr. Greenwood had the aid of George Eliot, Sir James Stephen, Sir Henry Maine, Mr. Richard Hutton, Sir Theodore Martin, and a host of eminent persons, who would certainly never dream of writing for evening papers now. The broad result was that, one summer day, months after the launching of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, the circulation was about five hundred, and the receipts from advertisements four and sixpence.

Solemn essays and heavy-handed humour had failed to touch the educated reader in the afternoon. He was eventually roused by Mr. James Greenwood's famous description of a visit to a casual ward. "A good stroke for poor-house reform," says the first editor of the *Pall Mall*. It would be more accurate to say that the "Amateur Casual" made the first appeal of evening journalism to those popular sensibilities which even "educated men and women" are not above. It was, in a word, a piece of "sensational copy" which made the first success of the new paper. The prospectus had contemplated nothing of this kind. The "chief aim of the *Pall Mall Gazette*" was "to bring into daily journalism that full measure of thought and culture which is now found only in a few reviews." Well, the "thought and culture" had been in full swing for many weeks, and the advertisements were worth four-and-six, and the circulation less than five pounds. It was a fitting moment for an impressionist study of the pauper in one of his authorised haunts. Where the learning of Fitzjames Stephen and Henry Maine had failed, where the clerkly wit of a Palgrave had fallen flat, where the philosophy of Arthur Helps on waste was simply waste paper, a descriptive reporter, with the style of the *Daily Telegraph*, made a palpable hit. "Literary considerations alone," said the prospectus, "would determine us to have our news reports written in plain English; but beyond these there is the fact that the lessons to be found in many an accident of human life or social polity are lost in the turgid language in which they are commonly narrated." This was very well when "educated men and women" were supposed to prefer Maine and Stephen for their evening reading; but the "Amateur Casual" extinguished this short-lived tradition. He showed that in daily journalism there can be no distinction between the evening and the morning. Readers who wanted "thought and culture," as Mr. Frederick Greenwood understood the expression, turned to the heavy reviews; in their evening paper they preferred a graphic and by no means austerely phrased account of a night's lodging in a casual ward. Since then, our evening journalists have advanced much further on the same lines. There is not much scope for "thought and culture" in the race-meeting and the football field. The "plain English" demanded by Mr. Greenwood's prospectus has become a jargon unintelligible even to accomplished linguists. Some "beautiful books of Richard Jefferies," says Mr. Greenwood, "first came out in the *Pall Mall Gazette* all to receive an exasperatingly small amount of attention, a not inconsiderable amount in itself, but so much less than their manifest worth and charm deserved as to be painfully disappointing to Jefferies' editor." No evening editor now repeats Mr. Greenwood's mistake. Instead of Jefferies you have biographical paragraphs about the lady who has made a great sensation at the music-halls by her singing of the world-famed ballad, "She Kept Her Tootsy Wootsies Warm."

Mr. Greenwood does no manner of justice to the irony of that prospectus. "Addressed as it will be to educated men and women, the space of the Paper will not be occupied by trifling chronicles." To-day it might be much more justly said of some evening journals than of certain women, that their function is to suckle fools and chronicle small beer. The trifles which the prospectus supposed to be disdained by "educated men and women" are indispensable to "Society" every day about five o'clock. Welcome to tea-tables is the polished young man who has cast his eye over the personal columns of the afternoon prints. Mr. Greenwood himself is not insensible to the charm of this kind of gossip. Recalling G. H. Lewes, who said a very pointed thing to him at an early crisis in the fortunes of the *Pall Mall*, he tells us that Lewes had a "remarkably wide mouth." No doubt the pungency of Lewes's comment on Mr. Greenwood's editorship made the width of his mouth a memorable phenomenon. The anecdote will pass round the globe. By this time it has probably been cabled to America, and has made its appearance in striking headlines to this effect: "Frederick Greenwood says G. H. Lewes had the biggest mouth in Queen Victoria's realm." Leading articles will be written on the subject, and the mouths of many eminent men, ancient and modern, will be measured with sparkling accuracy. Such are the details beloved of "educated men and women." Even Mr. Greenwood cannot live up to the austerity of his prospectus; he must expect to be invited by the editor of more than one evening journal to furnish an article on the noses of his first contributors, and on their average manners. Has he not told us that Anthony Trollope looked like "a wild boar," and frequently behaved as such?

A PROSPECTIVE REVIEW.

(From the *Journal of Hellenic Research*, April, 19—.)

WE approach with some diffidence the review of what is perhaps the most interesting and audacious book of modern times. Mr. Lang has long been known as a brilliant scholar and ingenious romancer; and now by the combination of both talents he has produced a work which bids fair to be epoch-making. In his "Homer and the Epic" he sturdily defended the Homeric unity; in his new work, "The Great Analogy," he proposes the fascinating theory of the Platonic authorship of the Homeric poems. It is too early as yet for criticism; we seek only to give our readers a sketch of the main argument.

The author begins with a statement of the many difficulties which beset the Homeric question. He repeats the old contention of Wolf—never utterly refuted—of the historical inconceivability of the current unionist view. He examines in detail the many inconsistencies in the "Iliad," the difficult question of the ninth and tenth books, the "Æneid" of Book XX., and the whole account of the games; and in the "Odyssey" shows the obvious awkwardness of much of the narrative. He points out the changes in ethics, in religion, in social life contained within a single poem, and with great freshness traces the effect of different legends, quoting from Sir Charles Fellows ("Travels in Lycia," pp. 413–6, ed. 1852) the remarkable fact that the Tloes, or people of Tlos in Lycia, are confounded in the "Iliad" with the

Troes. We have rarely found the intricacies of the question more clearly and convincingly detailed. Thence the author passes to a rapid survey of previous theories. Those of Gladstone, Mure, Nitzsch, and Grote he finds "preposterous," those of Wolf and Hermann "ultra-conservative," and those of Lachmann and Wilamowitz-Moellendorff "brilliant, but insufficient." "All," he says, "are in the bondage of the old sentimental idea of a personal Homer and an ancient origin for the poems. But sentiment has no place in scholarship; poetic feeling must ever be banished from the criticism of poetry; in such a matter rigorous science is needed; and if I be wrong, I would rather be wrong with science than right with nebulous sentiment."

And now, with infinite skill, learning, and eloquence, the author proceeds to develop his great theory. He first proves by what he calls the "method of simple observation" that the poems in their present state are at least as late as the time of Plato. Much of his argument is highly technical, and appeals only to the professed scholar; as he says himself in a happy quotation from Ruhnken, "Res a peritis sentiri potest, imperitis, quid sit, explicari non potest." He points out that we have frequent instances of the true Attic use of the article, and countless constructions and uses of words most easily explained by this assumption of a late origin. To take one example, there is ἠσχυμμένος from *αἰσχύνω* (Iliad xviii. 108), clearly formed on the analogy of τεθυμμένος from *τύφω* (Plato, Phædr. p. 230 A). Again, many words are obviously late formations, such as *κρήγυον*—a word common in later writers, and found in Plato (Alcib. I. chap. viii.). We notice many violations of the digamma inexplicable on any other theory; and, passing from mere verbal proof, we have such definitely Attic allusions as the offering of the Peplus to Athene in the sixth book, and the details of armour and military equipments, which do not differ materially—so the vases tell us—from those of the age of Pericles, while against their existence in early times there is strong *à priori* improbability.

From this discussion the author passes to one more closely connected with his theory. He argues against the idea of a personal Homer, which, according to some authorities, was current among the Greeks. Homer, he says, was a mere figure of myth, a Merlin, a Thomas the Rhymer, an Ossian, under whose name were grouped certain early folk-lays. After an elaborate series of parallels from Coptic, Chinese, and Rajput sources, mainly based on the great works of Schrumpf and Van Docken, he attacks his proper subject, and shows the vague nature of the word Homer. Pindar and Thucydides attribute all the Cyclic poems and a great deal more to the mythic Homer, and the former quotes from many poems not now included in the "Iliad" and "Odyssey." Homer, he says, celebrates the suicide of Ajax, when the Homer we know does nothing of the kind. In Od. xiii. 60 Glaucus is the son of Bellerophon; in Il. vi. 144 he is the son of Hippolochus. Again, the tragic poets seem to have been far more familiar with Telephus and Memnon, Æacus and Peleus, than with the characters of our "Iliad" and "Odyssey." Surely, had the "Iliad" and "Odyssey" been accessible to them in their present state, they would have drawn from their store. What is the explanation? Clearly that our "Iliad" and "Odyssey" in the age of the tragedians were merely formless lays, of the same nature as others on Peleus, Telephus, etc., but of inferior interest. They had not yet been moulded to artistic form by a great poet.

And now we come to the real pith of the matter. Who was this great poet who in the age of Plato first gave the poems artistic form? Here the author, in his picturesque phrase, ignores the bunker and takes a long drive. In a great question, he says, we must show no narrow cowardice, but boldly face the facts. Why not the great Plato himself? We are to imagine a large number of lays associated with the name of a single mythic author, from which the philosopher selected two, wrought them into artistic form, and published them anonymously. Their worth was immediately seen; their popularity was assured; and, as they were still attributed to the mythic Homer, few questions were asked about the greatest literary forgery of all time. "It would be an easy matter," says the author, "in a poem of a really simple plan for a man of genius to seize and maintain with consistency the salient points in the character of certain heroes of the popular lays." Plato, we know, was highly interested in such lays. In his "Ion" he attacks the foolish rhapsodists, and in his "Theætetus" (p. 153 C) the current theory which supposed the lays to have some meaning in relation to elemental worship. Again, he is the first Greek who quotes exclusively from the present "Iliad" and "Odyssey." Now, says the argument, if Plato wrote Homer, we should expect him only to quote the work which he had used as a basis for his own structure. Consequently, if he confines himself to quotation from such work, we should expect him to have written Homer. Again, while Herodotus and Thucydides make scant allusion to Homer, in Plato's time and in succeeding ages the poems became household words, to be quoted as we quote Shakespeare. Further, we know that Plato could write epic verse, for in the "Phædrus" (p. 252 B) we have two lines composed in parody of the Homeridæ. From these considerations the author concludes that we owe our Homer to Plato, and that the larger portion of it is his work.

But it is only when he leaves detail arguments that we see the author at his best. His real argument is analogical, one so convincing that we can only apply to it the name of the "great analogy." It is easy, he says, to conceive such versatility as the union of the speculative and poetic gifts. Mr. Labouchere has written "Hymns for Infant Minds" (see *Books and Bookmen*). Mr. Auberon Herbert and Mr. Lecky have dropped into poetry. But versatility fares hard at the hands of later and prosaic critics, and we may illustrate by analogical parody the treatment which, say, Mr. Balfour would receive from a German pedant of the year 3,000 A.D. In this figure, the sage would say, three separate conceptions are to be discerned. He is the author of certain works in philosophy; again, he is a sportsman of distinction; and finally he is a political orator, some of whose speeches survive. They obviously refer to three distinct characters, all of the same name, Balfour, who probably flourished within the same three centuries. There is first the philosophical writer, the author of the "Foundations of Belief" and "A Defence of Philosophic Doubt," who may probably be set down to the end of the nineteenth century. A contemporary miniature, now in the learned professor's collection, shows him to have had the pale and abstracted countenance of the student. The second may possibly refer to an athlete, one Balfour-Melville, whose winning of some "amateur golf championship" is chronicled in a rare print, *The Sportsman*, attributed with great probability to the year 1895. Finally, there is the political character, probably a fighter and revolutionary of a much earlier period. Traces of such a character are found in an obscure Scottish historian, Wodrau, of the seventeenth century, where the Balfour (called in the text Balfour of Burly) is a great warrior before the Lord, a defender of some rude early rites, probably pagan, which still survived in the mountains of Scotland.

Nothing, concludes the author, is easier than to be narrow, and deny versatility to a great man, merely because we ourselves are narrow and little-souled. Are we to have many different little authors of a great poem, or one incomparable genius, whose authorship is attested by the plain facts of common-sense? "They who do this," says Mr. Lang in his eloquent close, "pore over the hyssop on the wall, but are blind to the cedar of Lebanon."

THE DRAMA.

"Madame Sans-Gêne."

A PLAY which is no play, but a hotch-potch of trivial anecdotage, Empire furniture and costumes, and excerpts from the innumerable volumes of tittle-tattle for which the generic title is "Napoléon Intime," was manufactured by M. Sardou for Madame Réjane at the Paris Vaudeville three or four years ago, when the "Napoleonic revival" was at its height on the other side of the Channel. It has now been adapted by Mr. Comyns Carr, who is not M. Sardou, for Miss Ellen Terry, who is not Mme. Réjane, at the Lyceum, which is not the Vaudeville, in a capital which cares no more for any Napoleonic revival, past or present, than for the man in the moon. Is this a practical joke, designed to mystify the intelligent foreigner, who is expected to be coming over this season "in his thousands"? Or is it intended as a subtle compliment for Mme. Réjane, who is also, they say, about to revisit London? Anyhow, for the historian of the Victorian stage (when that gentleman makes his appearance to gratify a "long-felt want") it will be a fact not without piquancy. And, in the meantime, playgoers who do not trouble their heads about the why and wherefore of things, who do not look for a great national drama as a matter of course at our great national theatre, and who are content to see Miss Ellen Terry not merely "sans gêne" but "quand même," can spend a fairly amusing evening at the Lyceum.

They must take care not to miss the prologue, for that is a little play complete in itself. It tells how Catherine, the washerwoman of the Rue Sainte-Anne, took pity on a wounded Austrian Count, M. de Neipperg, fleeing from the Tuileries on the 10th of August, 1792, and hid him in her bedroom; how she thereby provoked the jealous suspicions of her lover, Sergeant Lefebvre, of the National Guard; how the Sergeant, by the trick of pretending that the Count was dead, tested the fidelity of his sweetheart; and how they fell into each other's arms to the tune of the "Marseillaise." The playgoer will please note the accuracy of the big French window and "jalousies" in the background, the excellent stage-management of the crowd of soldiers and *blanchisseuses* (though he may wonder why the usual ballet and chorus have been omitted), and the detail that the clothes hung out to dry on the clothes-line are real clothes. In the foreground he will see Catherine, called "Madame Sans Gêne," justifying her nickname by playing at Madame Angot (though, again, he will miss the music), putting her arms akimbo, telling her girls to "stir your stumps," wiping her mouth with the back of her hand, and spitting on her iron. He will observe that Miss Terry does all these things with gusto—the same Miss Terry, he will say to himself, whom he has seen as Portia, as Ophelia, and as Imogen—and he will at length understand what the poet meant by the line about making stepping-stones of our dead selves to higher things.

Now that (and it is the whole point of the play) is just what Catherine herself does not understand, as the playgoer will discover from the First Act. It is twenty years after, in the Palace of Compiègne; Sergeant Lefebvre has become the Duke de Dantzig and a Marshal of the Empire, and his Duchess has to receive the Imperial Court. The twenty years have not changed Catherine in the least; though she is represented as a woman of great capacity and enterprise, strange to say she has nothing of that adaptability which is usually taken to be a conspicuous quality of her sex; she has still the awkward manners and the vulgar tongue of the washerwoman. For illustration of awkward manners: a scene with the dancing master, stolen from *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, and, as Macaulay would say "marred in the stealing." Miss Terry kicks her train about and claps her hat on the back of her head with infinite enjoyment. For illustrations of vulgar tongue: a "slanging match" with the Emperor's supercilious sisters, Caroline and Elisa, who ply the Duchess with sarcasms, but come off second-best. The playgoer is invited to admire the "décolletage" of the ladies' Empire dresses, the barbaric magnificence of the uniforms, and the *sangfroid* (no, no! I mean *sans gêne!*) with which Miss Terry displays bare shoulders and arms as she "tries on" a new gown. Perhaps by this time he is wondering when the play is to begin, but he must be patient—is he not having an amusing evening?

Act II: Catherine bearding Napoleon in his den. The Napoleonic den will make all Wardour Street turn the colour of its oldest mahogany with envy. The gilding on the Emperor's bureau and on the massive doors must on no account be missed. And there—yes!—no!—yes!—it *is* the Emperor himself! You recognise him by his green coat, his stoop, his trick of putting his arms behind his back, and of pulling ladies about by their ears. For a moment his curious guttural sounds, his trick of sawing the air with his forefinger, deceived you into mistaking him for Richard III. or Louis XI., but when he brandishes the fire-shovel and bullies his sisters in Corsican *patois*, you know your man. But Catherine doesn't care for him or his fire-shovel—not she! Didn't she "wash for him" twenty years ago, when he was the impecunious young Lieutenant Buonaparte? Why, she has his little bill for sixty francs in her pocket, still unpaid! And she will stand none of his nonsense, either, for when he kisses the scar on her arm (she had been wounded as a vivandière—the wonderful woman has been everything in her time) and would prolong the process, she remarks, sharply, that she "has no more wounds." If the playgoer still asks when the play is going to begin, I would point to the fire-shovel, the green coat, the *patois*, the pulled ears, and ask him what more does he want? Let him be grateful for the zest with which Miss Terry and Sir Henry Irving show him Madame Sans-Gêne sans-gêning and Napoléon Intime intiming. What? Not enough? Then here's de Neipperg for him, back again with a real, right-down, Sardou plot. De Neipperg loves the Empress Marie-Louise, and in quest of her commands enters the palace at dead of night, only to be captured by the Emperor and laid low, not with the fire-shovel, but by a couple of trusty mamelukes. "Off with his head!" says Richard—I mean "Let him be shot at daybreak!" says Napoleon.

> "But shall de Neipperg die?
> But shall de Neipperg die?
> Then Catherine, Madame Sans-Gêne,
> Will know the reason why."

In other words, Catherine, with the help of Fouché (indispensable Fouché! what would a Napoleon play be without him?), enables de Neipperg to escape in the last act. If the playgoer objects that he doesn't care a straw about de Neipperg and his nocturnal adventure, I refer him to the swarthy features of Roustan, the mameluke; to the splendid hussar uniform of the captain of the guard; to the exquisite art of Miss Terry in portraying a lady trying to write a letter, and breaking down in the spelling—and I remind him that he has spent an amusing evening.

But to the intelligent foreigner, who visits our great national theatre to see our English drama and our English histrionics in perfection, I really do not know what to say. The old explanations, (1) "le spleen," (2) "the English are all mad," (3) "le cant Britannique," are at his service. He must take his choice.

A. B. W.

THE NEW ENGLISH ART CLUB.

"EARLY Morning, Venice" (1), W. H. Y. Titcomb. The Ducal Palace and the Campanile. A truthful study of the relative values and colours of the sky and the surfaces of the buildings and the water. An absolute respect for the large facts of

the construction of the scene, without any theatrical grouping or accessories. Venice seen calmly, critically—seen like a valued friend, with sympathy, but without illusions. "A Lady Reading" (2), W. W. Russell. A good drawing by one of the most remarkable draughtsmen of the younger generation. "After Sundown, Stockholm, Sweden" (4), by Jane Inglis. A little pastel with very fine colour relations. The cold blue sky of twilight, the red houses, the earthen cliffs, the trees and lights all hold their places with great certainty and delicacy, and by means of a material in which the achievement of such just values is extremely difficult. "Alicante" (14), H. Brabazon. The whole town and the sands deftly suggested in luminous shadow and relieved against the great illuminated hill. A splendid note for a picture, which would never be as good as the note! "A Midsummer Moon" (16), Laurence Housman. The more welcome in this exhibition because it is a fancy, in a preponderant atmosphere of fact. A group of nude figures huddling out into the trees in the moonlight. The air seems heavy with passion. One figure casts a backward glance into the porch, where others pause spellbound, as they let fall their robes, to follow into the mild effulgent night. "Grey Venice" (21), W. H. Y. Titcomb. Another delicately true study of grey weather, the divine grey that only is in Venice. "A Sketch in the Champs Élysées" (26), by D. S. MacColl. A hint of an idea, and not an affidavit. "Mount Trenchan" (27), Henry Tonks. An excellent drawing from nature. "Summer" (34), L. Raven Hill. A water-colour picture without detail, telling its story boldly and clearly at a distance, but not to be seen except at a distance. Should have been hung high. "Fun" (35), Walter Cadby. Rather a rich still-life study, to be seen near. Should have been hung lower. "Mrs. Marshall" (37), C. W. Furse. A pleasant realistic portrait. The character is not shirked or sweetened, or in any other way falsified. The painter understands that the woman is a lady, and expresses it in the portrait, a none too common achievement. This kind of self-respecting portraiture is rare enough, and should be very much appreciated. "Vétheuil" (39), D. S. MacColl. Another half-shred of a sentiment of some kind—something about a statue, about a plant, about girls coming up from out of a glade. An echo of an echo, and much pleasanter than an evening paper. "An Easy Pose" (40), Fred. Brown. An excellent little study of a nude child, charged as full of colour as it can hold, and holding it all without overflowing. "Limehouse Reach" (42), the late C. E. Holloway. Fine full painting, recalling something of Whistler's manner, with a fuller brush, and a vision much less exquisite; a sound and painterlike performance. "Portrait of Mrs. Frederick Pegram" (43), P. Wilson Steer. Carved out in a massive manner with great sweetness and certainty. Perfectly illuminated. At the proper distance it is marvellous to see how everything takes its proper place, and how completely it is stated.

"Blind Man's Buff" (47), Henry Tonks. That delightful and rare combination—technical achievement in the service of an interesting imagination. It is as true as "The Embarcation to the Island of Cythera," and hence it is so delightful. None of *la vérité vraie* for Mr. Tonks, thank you! He gets quite enough of that all day. The picture is a mine of gracious fancies, beautifully expressed. Was there ever a better expression of sheer happiness than in the superb air of the woman to the right of the canvas, next to the tall boy? "Richmond Castle" (54), P. Wilson Steer. A splendid landscape. An example of the best that the modern preoccupations, chiefly associated with the name of Monet, can yield. Space in three dimensions, solidity, and light. A canvas like this is absolute creation. It is like the current modern conception of what the novel should be: a creation without comment; a brutal fact which you may take or leave. It craves for no indulgence at your hands. It lives and breathes. You can enjoy it, or turn your back on it. But it is inevitable, and could not be other than it is. There is in this picture the special sense that I have seen in an oak of Rousseau's, and, of course, always in Monet, and seldom elsewhere—that leafage is thick, bunchy, solid stuff, and not a spray, like sea-weed on a card. The impression of nature you get at the proper distance. Near to is another beauty—the accretion of a hail-storm of paint under the passionate impulse of a born painter, and a born colourist, an incrustation, a precipitation, which cannot be manufactured, but which is, in a sense, a natural beauty. Few people have a natural taste for this quality. It is strong meat. See if you can learn to like it! It is a pleasure, like another. "A Spanish Lady" (69), by the same hand, has the same qualities as the other portrait, with a pleasing vivacity in the movement of the shoulders. "Vanity Fair" (70), by J. E. Christie, again, endears itself to me by the very fact that it is a fancy in the modern desert of facts. It is graceful and engaging, and full of passages of fresh and gay colour, solidly painted and justly related. "Sketch in Berkshire" (77), by Francis Bate, has a certain importance, because it seems to me an excellent example of the limits beyond which a sketch from nature is liable to trip itself up, and lose its reason for existing. Anything between that and a picture generally succeeds in having the merits of neither. "Off Spaniard Road" (81), and "Street Scene, Gunnersbury" (85), by H. Muhrman, are exquisite little pastels full of feeling and quality.

"The Blue Gown" (83), George Thomson. A study unflinching in character and done throughout in solid painting. Work of this kind would carry in positions where some pictures with more engaging superficial graces of execution would not tell.

"A View in Bath" (90), Sir William Eden, Bart. A pleasant sketch with some rich qualities in grey and brown. An amateur who can pass the jury of the New English Art Club is to be congratulated.

"A Freeholder" (91) is a study in values by James Charles, who is a great painter. There is no very interesting arrangement in this particular canvas, and there are obvious faults, such as the perspective of the bottom of the glass, but there is the clear, clean perception of just relations between fair tones, which belongs only to the born colourist of a high order. "In a Malay Courtyard" (96), C. W. Furse. A life-sized study of a black woman in a crinoline, drawn with considerable ease and power. "The Minister's Daughter" (97), James Charles. A picture by no means faultless, but, for some indescribable reasons, evident as the work of a great painter. Rich and sober, painted before the complete clearing up of the vision which is evident in his later work, it has some of the passionate qualities of a dawning talent, which the more powerful, serene, and accomplished performance of maturity does not always retain. "A Rocky Solitude" (100), W. Y. Macgregor. One of the most exquisite pieces of *patina* in paint that I have ever seen. A beautiful harmony of tender greys; a vision of entrancing beauty and interest, of a growth as mysterious as the birth of a flower. "Algérienne" (114), "Tête d'Enfant" (115), "Tête de Jeune Fille" (116), M. Renoir. Renoir has passed through many stages in the evolution of his talent. The outdoor manner, largely speaking, of Manet (boating parties, restaurants on the river) was followed by preoccupation with the hard drawing of the primitives (nudes), which has left its mark for good. The painting now is the painting of a miniaturist on a larger scale; it depends for its brilliancy on the ground. The drawing is achieved in arbitrary tones of blue and orange and other bright chromatic oppositions. The drawing is full of character. If the ages have been rifled in the painter's restless search, *ce n'est pas pour des prunes.* In "Tête d'Enfant" a certain definite expression is obtained by the artifice of making up the eyes on canvas

with a blue line, for all the world like Cleopatra or Miss Marie Lloyd. In "Tête de Jeune Fille" the profile — the tiny, elusive, childlike, open-mouthed face — is exquisitely drawn. It is that child, and could be no other. To each one his own methods and his own manner. M. Renoir more than justifies himself. We cannot sit here in our newspaper offices and draw up bye-laws for the studios.

ST. P.

FRANK WEKENEY'S BILL.

"And statesmen at her council met
Who knew the seasons, when to take
Occasion by the hand, and make
The bounds of freedom wider yet."—*Tennyson.*

FRANK WEKENEY, Esq., M.P., was what is called a man of parts, whatever that may mean. He had once spent six weeks in India, and consequently possessed a perfect and exhaustive knowledge both of the way that country ought to be governed and of the difficult question of the rupee. Not that this in itself proved him a man of parts: any person who has spent six weeks in India and does *not* know everything there is to be known about that country and the Government thereof, is—well, a most exceptional individual. But Frank Wekeney had more than this ordinary form of intelligence; he had travelled in Thibet, and had there chanced upon a barbarous hill-tribe where this singular and interesting custom prevails: the principal dish at all the marriage-feasts—the equally indigestible counterpart of our English wedding-cake—is the mother-in-law herself.

It is not necessary to dwell upon the advantages of this system, both as a deterrent to match-making mothers and a preventive of post-nuptial domestic unpleasantness. They are obvious to the meanest intellect, and need no pointing out.

Now Frank Wekeney was a man gifted with the power to grasp fresh ideas and to adapt them to established environments—the art, in fact, of mending old garments with new cloth: he was, further, a married man; and Mrs. Wekeney's mother was in her prime. Consequently he had the wisdom to perceive that the great English-speaking nations have yet much to learn even from the barbarous hill-tribes of Thibet: and consequently also he was fond of travelling.

Mrs. Frank Wekeney was a handsome woman; but her mother, Lady Wilverown, was decidedly handsomer. People called her an *édition de luxe* of her daughter (and they spelt it *looks*). Lady Wilverown was never actually unkind or violent to Frank; but she had a way of saying, "*Dear* Mr. Wekeney!" when she disapproved of him, which froze the very marrow in his bones. And if saying it once did not silence him, she said it again and again till it did. The first time that "*Dear* Mr. Wekeney!" occurred in a conversation, Frank generally tried to explain his meanings and vindicate his actions: the second time he humbly and sweetly apologised for his very existence: and the third time he merely sat mute, and decided in his own mind that a mother-in-law was an evil and a bitter thing.

When Parliament reassembled, Frank Wekeney brought forward a Bill to the effect that the aforementioned custom of the Thibetian hill-tribe should become the law of England. It was, as might be expected, a most popular measure. The Prime Minister was delighted with it, and with the young member of his party who had proposed it; for the Parliament was moribund, and the Premier was in sore need of a new and popular cry wherewith to go to the country. Here was one after his own heart! The world was weary of annexing continents, and disestablishing churches, and disintegrating empires, and inaugurating new eras; in vain were these tempting programmes dangled before men's jaded eyes; but here was a chord which appealed to rich and poor alike—a touch of nature which made the whole world kin. The contest between Church and State—between the Classes and the Masses—between Repose and Reform—may come to an end; but there is no truce in the war between Man and his Mother-in-law.

The great Bill passed merrily through its earlier stages. Frank was able to give his whole time and attention to it, as Lady Wilverown was at that time holding a succession of meetings throughout the provinces against the iniquitous custom of a married man's keeping an opinion of his own without a licence, which said licence to be procured only from his mother-in-law; and Mrs. Wekeney was accompanying her mother on this important missionary tour. On one memorable occasion the Bill was nearly wrecked by a North-country member, who spoke at great length upon the dangers arising from so heavy (and presumably tough) a meal in the middle of the day; this speaker had considerable knowledge of the subject, as his excellent wife suffered from conscientious scruples against dining late upon the Sabbath; consequently—as he informed the House—every Monday was Black Monday to him; and it was invariably Wednesday before Richard (whose real name was Robert) was himself again. But the political catastrophe was averted by a brilliant young Radical, who saved the cause and established his own reputation by suggesting that "the words *rôti, en aspic, or cut up into sandwiches,* stand part of the question"; for—as he pointed out—in a sandwich, as in a sausage, the ignorance which is bliss is the attribute of the consumer. This train of thought led the young orator into brilliant speculations as to a satisfactory manner of finally disposing of all one's poor relations at one evening party, the guests who had partaken thereof being none the worse and none the wiser; which opened up lurid possibilities as to the sandwiches of a man's past as well as the sandwiches of his future; but the honourable member was recalled to better and brighter thoughts by cries of *Question.*

One peaceful summer's evening, when the course of the great Bill was running as smoothly as the course of love which is not true, Frank Wekeney gave a little dinner in one of the dinner-cells underneath the High Court of Parliament.

"Isn't everything going splendidly?" cried Lady Herbert Fitzcoddlington, who was seated at Frank's right hand. "We shall pass the Bill without any difficulty; and then, if the House of Lords gives us any trouble, we shall go to the country on it, and come back with the largest majority our party has ever had."

"I certainly think it would be a popular cry," said Frank, in the sweetly instructive manner he always adopted towards women not of his wife's family: "to my mind, dear lady, it is questions of domestic policy such as this which demand the attention of every Government. 'The greatest happiness of the greatest number' is the only solid foundation whereon any political superstructure can be built—by which, of course, is meant the happiness of that section of the community to which one belongs one's self."

"And do you think that this measure will ensure the greatest happiness of the greatest number?" inquired Mrs. Thorowgood, one of those satisfactory women who begin at No. 1 when they visit the Royal Academy, and go bravely and unflinchingly right through the catalogue till they are found faint yet pursuing among the water-colours.

"Without doubt," answered Frank. "I have brought my mathematical knowledge to bear upon the question, and can prove to a demonstration that while the number of a woman's sons-in-law is regulated only by the quantity of her daughters or the quality of their attractions, it is unusual for any sane man to have more than one mother-in-law."

"This is the thin end of the wedge," said Lady Herbert, "and I don't believe that an enlightened nation like ours will stop at mothers-in-law when once it is proved how well the system works."

Frank could not help wondering what the thick

end of the wedge must be like if Lady Wilverown represented the thin one; but he merely said, in his Columbus-and-the-egg-like manner, "It is an old system, dear lady, and a very simple one. I have only tried to adapt it to our modern civilisation."

"By the way, I see that Mrs. Wekeney and her mother are at home again," chattered Lady Herbert.

"What makes you think that?" asked Frank, trying to look careless, while a great fear chilled his soul. "They were not at home when I came to the House at three o'clock."

"Oh! no; but I met them driving from Waterloo as I came here," answered her ladyship.

Then Frank knew that the Assyrian had come down like a wolf on the fold in his absence, and the cold grip of fear and coming disaster grew tighter round his heart. But he tried to be brave, and kept saying to himself that he was an English statesman and need fear no man's mother-in-law; and then he remembered that Canute had been an English king and yet hadn't the slightest influence over the incoming tide when it chose to come in; for no one knew better than Frank Wekeney that though "man marks the earth with ruin, his control stops with the shore," or with the bodily presence of his mother-in-law.

Let kind hands draw a veil over the rest of the sad story. Suffice it to say that Lady Wilverown held only one conversation with Frank on the subject of his great Bill, wherein the expression "*Dear* Mr. Wekeney" occurred seven times. Frank—though a good deal shattered—survived that conversation; but the Bill didn't.

So Frank Wekeney's Bill was withdrawn on the third reading; and the lengthened sweetness of the long-drawn-out Parliament evaporated in a Dissolution; and Frank's party was hopelessly beaten at the General Election. His own seat was contested by some local magnate, and Frank came out of the battle crowned with what is called "a moral victory." He found it an unsatisfactory kind of thing, it is true; but, at any rate, it was more than he had ever had in his own home.

Frank never went back into Parliament. He spends most of his time travelling in outlandish districts where there is no accommodation for ladies, and says he shall continue to do so as long as health and strength are spared to Lady Wilverown. He is also writing a great poem on one of the hill-tribes of Thibet, and he calls it "The Delight of Asia."

ELLEN THORNEYCROFT FOWLER.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

"THE GREAT DICTIONARY."

SIR,—In the article entitled "The Great Dictionary," which appeared in THE SPEAKER of the 10th inst., the word "dispar" is mentioned as a word which was once used at Winchester College. This word, spelt "disper," was in common use when I left Winchester in 1846; and I possess a "word-book"—*i.e.* a dictionary of Winchester slang—in MS., dated 1845, in which the word "disper" appears, the meaning assigned being "a helping of meat, pudding, etc." The derivation of the word was always a puzzle, and I do not think it is ever used except by Winchester boys.—Yours, etc.

Liverpool, April 13th. J. F. COLLIER.

CONSCIENCE.

Nescio quae culpae per tot naufragia fractum
Durus praeteritae torquet vox intima vindex.

WHO art thou that betimes upon my brow,
Even on mine—
Layest a hand divine,
Veiling thy countenance? Why choosest thou
Such lips as these to murmur speech of thine?
Hast thou no answer now?—
Now; when within the chamber of my heart,
Dismantled, bare,
No passion stirs the air,
Since grief has set my life and love apart,
Which once were wedded in communion fair.
Answer me, who thou art?

I asked not of thee when the leaf was green,
Long! long ago—
Who taught my spirit—so
As mothers teach their children what hath been
Of God in man—to kindle at the glow
Of some diviner Presence inly seen.

No truly! No! Why should I question *then*,
—Stranger to fears,
Drying but childish tears
For childish ills—how I should face thee when
The grim fulfilment of the hidden years
Should number me with men?

Or later, tossed on the light prow of Love,
—Daring to ride
Breakers till then untried;
How should I fear the kindly breeze which drove
My keelson oceanward across the tide?
The great winds slept above.

Alas! the great winds made an end of sleep;
And from afar,
Withouten sun or star,
Weary of buffeting, compelled to creep
From rock to jutting rock, upon the bar
I struggled from the deep.

Weary I am of voyaging in vain.
I can no more.
The hope which lightly bore
Me out has brought me crippled from the main.
The barque which shot so blithely from the shore
Will never float again.

Here do I lie upcast upon the sand.
O sweet Oblivion!
I pray thee lay upon
My troubled head thy all-subduing hand!
Or dwells there nought—until the night be won—
Of magic in thy wand?

Spirit! who at the casement of my soul
Shewest thy face,
Grant me this only grace—
Not to remember! While the summers roll,
Not to remember! O do thou efface
The past from this poor heart; the writing from the scroll!

J. W. DE LYS.

A LITERARY CAUSERIE.

FINE MISCELLANEOUS READING.

WHAT is a Runcible Spoon? Of what kind of wood was the Ark constructed? Who were John Doe and Richard Roe? What was the name of Richard II.'s favourite horse, and of Richard III.'s? What are "gowans"?

"'We twa hae run about the braes
And pu'd the gowans fine'

—in a figurative point of view—on several occasions," as Mr. Micawber remarked in the course of a famous after-dinner speech. "I am not exactly aware," said Mr. Micawber, with the old roll in his voice and the old indescribable air of saying something genteel, "what gowans may be, but I have no doubt that Copperfield and myself would frequently have taken a pull at them, if it had been feasible." Some Southron admirers of Scottish literature may have been vexed with the same uncertainty. The gowan is the daisy, of course: the

"Wee sleekit crimson-tippèd beastie,"

as another after-dinner orator rather ambiguously put it, the other day, at a Burns celebration. And Richard II.'s horse was Roan Barbary (Shakespeare, *Richard II.*, v. 5); and Richard III.'s was White Surrey (Shakespeare, *Richard III.*, v. 8). The Ark gives a little more trouble. It was made of gopher wood. But what was gopher wood?

It was *acacia*, says the Religious Tract Society.
It was *boxwood*, says (*sic*) the Arabian Commentators.
It was *bulrushes* daubed over with slime, says Dawson.
It was *cedar*, says the Targum of Onkelos.
It was *cypress*, says Fuller.
It was *ebony-wood*, says Bochart.
It was *deal* or *fir-wood*, say some.
It was *juniper-wood*, says Castellus.
It was *pine*, say Asenarius, Munster, Persic, Taylor, etc.
It was *wicker-wood*, says Geddes.

"It was belts, belts, belts" over the question, no doubt, between this rather mixed lot of commentators; and it was "Heigho!" says Antony Rowley. But Dr. E. Cobham Brewer, whose "Dictionary of Phrase and Fable" (Cassell & Co.) supplies us with so many opportunities of being uncertain about gopher-wood, does not presume to dictate. Like Brer Fox, he ain't sayin' nuthin. Not his to exacerbate strife between the Religious Tract Society and the Targum of Onkelos! You buy his Dictionary and you take your choice.

The Targum of Onkelos naturally reminds one of the Akond of Swat; and so we come to Mr. Lear and Runcible Spoons.

"They dinèd on mince and slices of quince,
Which they ate with a runcible spoon."

To my shame, I had always imagined "runcible" to be a nonsense-epithet, like Mr. Lewis Carrol's "slithy" and "mimsy," or Mr. Lear's own "scroobious" and "purpledicular." I had ranked the Runcible Spoon, the Fimble Fowl, the Co-operative Cauliflower and the Quangel-Wangel together as mere "fizzy extraneous utterances" irreconcilable with fact. I was wrong. Dr. Brewer defines Runcible Spoon as "a horn spoon with a bowl at each end, one the size of a tablespoon, and the other the size of a teaspoon. There is a joint midway between the two bowls by which the bowls can be folded over." This is definite; but how can one apply it to a "Runcible Cat," which Dr. Brewer leaves unexplained?—

"And all the Sailors and Admirals cried,
When they saw him nearing the further side—
'He has gone to fish for his aunt Jobiska's
Runcible Cat with crimson whiskers!'"

Dr. Brewer died, a few weeks ago, at a ripe age. A portrait of him at the age of eighty-five faces the title-page of my copy of the Dictionary—which the title-page proclaims to have reached its 103rd thousand. Their avoidance of all polemics may partly account for the longevity of the author and his work. The origin of John Doe and Richard Roe, for instance, might have provided a controversy as persistent as the vendetta between those two distinguished litigants. But Dr. Brewer contents himself with defining them as "any mere imaginary persons, or men of straw," and adds, in his picturesque way, that "John Doe, Richard Roe, John O'Noakes, and Tom Styles are the four sons of 'Mrs. Harris,' all bound apprentices to the legal profession." For my part I wonder that Sir George Cox and Professor Max Müller in their time have not made a nature-myth or a disease-of-language myth out of John Doe and Richard Roe. John Doe is obviously Ian Dhu, the black, and Richard Roe as obviously Richard Roy, or Rubh, the red. And what further evidence is needed to convince any reasoning man that their inveterate litigation symbolises the eternal struggle between darkness and ruddy day?

Since Bayle's Dictionary, there has been no book over which an ordinary man may more profitably spend his time and yet retain the pleasant sensation of wasting it. You browse from William of Occam, Offa's Dyke, and Og, the King of Bashan, on to Ultima Thule, Mr. Gladstone's Umbrella, Ulysses' Bow, Umble-pie (a pie made of "umbles"—*i.e.* the liver, kidneys, etc., of a deer), Unicorns, Unmentionables, Up the Spout, Upas-tree, and Urim and Thummim, and back to the Evangelists, the Ettrick Shepherd, Epsom Salts, and the Eternal Fitness of Things. You open the book at random and happen on a column of information about Rhopalic Verse, Thomas the Rhymer, the Ribbon Dodge and Ribston Pippins. How many people know that Ribston Pippins come from Ribston in Yorkshire?—"where Sir Henry Goodricke planted three pips, sent to him from Rouen in Normandy. Two pips died, but from the third came all the Ribston apple-trees in England." (I wish somebody would plant three more pips: for I am told that this fine stock is in some danger of dying out.) The Ribbon Dodge (name borrowed from the Irish Ribbonmen) consists in plying a person secretly with threatening letters in order to drive him out of the neighbourhood or compel him to do something he objects to. And Rhopalic verse is "a line in which each successive word has more syllables than the one preceding it": for instance—

"Rem tibi confeci doctissime dulcisonorum."
Or—"Read Brewer's pleasantly inconsequent Dictionary."
Or—"Spes deus æternæ-est staticnis conciliator."

which the Editor translates—

"Hope even solaces miserable individuals."

which again I take to be the worst recorded translation in the absurdest known form of verse.

Nor let the average reader despise Dr. Brewer's diffusive industry, unless he can answer the following short examination paper off-hand:—

1.—Who was the Gentle Shepherd, the Hammer of Heretics, the Pilot who Weathered the Storm, the Mellifluous Doctor, the Swan of Cambray, the Boy Bachelor, the White Devil of Wallachia, the Philosopher with the Golden Thigh?
2.—Explain M. B. Waistcoat, Froude's Cat, Lombard Fever, the Nose Tax, Napier's Bones, a Dutch Uncle, Paper Marriages.
3.—To whom are these dying speeches attributed? (*a*) "Laissez la verdure." (*b*) "We owe a cock to Asclepios." (*c*) "Fight on, my merry men." (*d*) "Give Dayrolles a chair." (*e*) "Don't let the awkward squad fire over me." (*f*) "Huz! huz!"
4.—Multiply the fiddler's wages by a baker's dozen of tizzies, and express the product in pounds (Scots).
5.—Write down in feet and inches the respective statures of Antæus, Orion, Chang, Goliath of Gath, James McDonald of Cork, and the biggest Jew in Josephus, and say which of these (if any) could have slept with comfort in the bedstead of Og of Bashan.

Dr. Brewer's Dictionary seems to have enjoyed a very satisfactory past. If Sir Walter Besant will only found his College for Literary Aspirants it may count on a brilliant future. Its Bibliographical Appendix is a solid service to literature.

A. T. Q. C.

REVIEWS.

THE RELIGION OF LANDSCAPE.

THE POETICAL WORKS OF WILLIAM WORDSWORTH. Edited by William Knight. Vols. V.–VI. London: Macmillan & Co.

IN these two volumes we are reading "The Excursion," which ranges through the whole of Volume V., and after that long pilgrimage—as also in strong contrast to some of its features—the beautiful classic studies "Laodamia" and "Dion," the sonnets on the River Duddon, and "Memorials of a Tour on the Continent," with extracts from the "Journals" of Mrs. Wordsworth and Dorothy, which are exquisite in language and description. Here is now

the later Wordsworth, contemplative, highly self-centred, a little arrogant, and, in his less taking moods, not a little pompous—which, indeed, as Edward FitzGerald has slily remarked, all the Wordsworths seem to have been, "pompous and priggish" and wanting in a sense of humour. This treasure, then, was kept in an earthen vessel, the clay of which has not always been transmuted by heavenly fire into ruby or amethyst. It is hard North-country formation; or, to escape from figures, we must look on our poet as an inspired, but stubborn, narrow-minded and cross-grained peasant, in whom the faculty of ingenuous criticism or dramatic insight is altogether wanting. His own visions are enough for him; other men may learn when he speaks, but from any of them, except the dead and immortal singers—Virgil, or perhaps old Drayton, or the majestic Puritan that has given us an everlasting Paradise—he will not learn. He wanders about, musing and murmuring his long-drawn soliloquies, with an eye such as none ever had before or since for the life in Nature, and an ear open to secrets whispered by winds and waters, by light and darkness, by all the foolishly-named "inanimate things" that to his keen and piercing intuition are as much in movement always as now the student of science knows them to be. Never was there a universe so full of voices, energies, echoes, and insistent messages to man as the world that Wordsworth calls up, whether in some lyric burst, clear and transparent as flame, or in the rounded, undulating eloquence which in many a page of "The Excursion" carries us along, half willing, half surprised that we do not find this interminable poem as dull as to the popular judgment it has commonly appeared.

The number of variants in these thousands of lines are marvellously few. Wordsworth spent some twenty years upon "The Excursion"—from 1795 to 1814—and his sister's "Journal" records the fatigue of writing and re-writing which led to illness, but never to any shortening of his task, on "William's" part. For a long while, this epic of the soul was known simply as "The Pedlar," and it has retained all the uncompromising directness of Wordsworth's realism, as we now call it, to the loss of some higher qualities. The least earthly among our great English teachers, but still with an iron grip like the sagaman's of Iceland, Wordsworth has resolved on our finding poetry and divine significance in his friends Jones and Walker, which is most meet and fitting, but also in their names; and to that we feeble folk demur. Yet the wise, since his day, have pretty well overthrown his doctrine that there is no such thing as a language peculiar to poetry; they have shown the reverse, indeed, for poetry came long before prose. It is a form of "atavism"; it cannot break away from its origin or forget "that large utterance of the early gods," and, as being inspired, it will choose, and sift, and glorify the language of men. Had Wordsworth kept Homer and the Old Testament open as he wrote, the abundant scoriæ of prose which now lie in our way when we join him upon his "Excursion" would have been swept into the sea. And with concentration would have come intensity; with severe outline, passion; the jewels that now gleam at intervals would have shone like the Pleiades; and thus we might have pointed to an English "Anti-Lucretius," firm, sinewy, bold as that Epicurean chant, which not all its atheism or its melancholy can hinder from being one of the undying masterpieces of human achievement.

"The Excursion" is, we say, an "Anti-Lucretius." If Professor Knight were undertaking a critical edition of his poet, this parallel would require to be drawn out at length. We should be made to observe how the lines which introduce it are among the most sublime and daring which any Christian singer has ventured upon; for who else has said that he "must breathe in worlds to which the Heaven of heavens is but a veil"? or that he "passes unalarmed" "Jehovah with His thunder, and the choir of shouting angels?" Who besides Wordsworth has in three lines laid open the "mind of man" as a chaos more terrible than the dark abyss, "or aught of blinder vacancy scooped out by help of dreams"? He has taken the problem at its deepest depth, and on certain pages that remain for ever set into the living literature of Englishmen, he has gone up to altitudes from which that depth seems shallow; to "visionary majesties of light," to "passionate intuitions," and "high visitations," wherein the doubt, the terror, and the gloom of Lucretius melt as in the presence of the morning. He may, forsooth, stoop and loiter, losing the ecstasy to point a moral, suddenly dropping "ten thousand fathoms down," and tempting us who know his flights, and where he will rise again, to skip these sermonisings; yet, if we cannot enjoy the "flying sunbeams," and "the stars that glance along the clouds," and "the mist, the shadows, light of golden suns, motions of moonlight," which hither come and shape "a language not unwelcome to sick hearts and idle spirits," why, we will e'en put up with these anonymous characters of a drama in which there is nothing dramatic.

Or else—which is better still—let us build the drama for ourselves by intercalating the sad and sceptical rhythms of the Roman poet where the "Solitary," too soon converted, only hints and does not dare to fling upon the wind his disbelief in that smiling creed, "all's well with the world." Thus we shall construe more closely the tacit arguments—for, as always, they are the strongest—which landscape, so tenderly and yet so truly painted, holds against the Epicurean despondency. It is reasoning subtle but sure, profound and searching, with a power to touch the heart far beyond some of Wordsworth's deliberate instances given us in the later five books, themselves too discursive and didactic, as well as twice too long. But of the six or seven large visions—we know them in every line, but will not stay to determine their number—not one could be spared. They have passed into the crystal heaven of poetry, where they shine, tranquil and unchanging, as proofs of the one indispensable doctrine to which they lead up, that "man is greater than we know." It is the exercise of faculties, beheld here at work in their perfection, that best answers the killing doubt awakened in those who, merely with the "dull eye" of science, "dividing still and still dividing," peer into atoms, or start back bewildered when their journeyings drive them upon the "*flammantia mœnia mundi*." So that if we are careful to distinguish between the poet's own text—verses which are a golden transcript of realities seen in happy moments—and his commentary, set down with a view to edification, we can draw a line through this labyrinth which will leave the prose, and, like a magnet, tremble with delight when the god becomes manifest. Perhaps nearly one half of "The Excursion" would then sink down to a dead letter. But may not so much be overlooked in "Paradise Lost," and Milton yet remain the starry splendour that we worship as it rises, "new bathed in ocean," from the storms and whirlwinds of civil war?

There is, at all events, a kind of gradation worth remarking in "The Excursion." Its first two books were thought by Coleridge to form one of the most beautiful poems in our language; and though some of us do not feel so intimately touched by the story of Margaret as was Charles Lamb, it is impossible to read the description of the "Wanderer's" bringing-up without feeling that here is a revelation of power and grace, unique if Wordsworth had not himself anticipated its outlines when writing "The Prelude." Again, the first four books have a unity of place and theme, and a most impressive conclusion which justifies all that has gone before; they do surely impart—

> "Authentic tidings of invisible things;
> Of ebb and flow, and ever-during power;
> And central peace, subsisting at the heart
> Of endless agitation."

The rest, except where it yields a steadfast picture of the landscape, and in some naturally musical interludes, has the effect of a sequel. No doubt the brave "Pastor" proves or illustrates that which he undertook to bring home to us—the possibility of high virtue in humble circumstances, and that a world of good may flourish in the most sequestered vales; but we have left the heights, and, unless greatly in love with Wordsworth, we let the volume fall. It seems more profitable then to turn to "Laodamia," with its felicities of phrase and calm Elysian airs; to ascertain by delighted comparison how far it has a likeness, or is unlike, to the Grecian moods and symphonies of John Keats; in what degree it surpasses or must be set at a distance from "Tithonus," "Ulysses," and "The Lotos-Eaters." And when we have spent an idle, pleasant hour in such matching of excellences, still there remains the pilgrimage through those sonnets of the River Duddon, a holiday in itself, which to some will be enhanced, to others, less tractable, dashed with cross-gleams and showers of too minute investigation, by the disciples—do they err on this side idolatry?—who must needs follow Wordsworth with an ordnance map between their fingers. Peace be with them!

PILGRIM GEOGRAPHY.

THE DAWN OF MODERN GEOGRAPHY. A History of Exploration and Geographical Science, from the Conversion of the Roman Empire to A.D. 900. By C. Raymond Beazley, F.R.G.S. London: John Murray.

MR. BEAZLEY has completed what we fear must have been a trying and a cheerless task. He convinced himself that the history of geography and of geographical discovery would not be complete without some account of what was done in Christendom during the darkest of the dark ages. Christianity, so far as science and intellectual activity are concerned, descended upon Europe like a blighting frost, from which it took something like a millennium to recover. Fortunately during that period progress in these directions did not cease. Whatever may have been the paralysing influence of Islam in later centuries, its first effect seems to have been to stimulate scientific and philosophical activity, and above all to encourage travel and commerce and geographical theory. As Mr. Beazley's main object, however, is to lay before the English student all he can discover in the way of travel and geography in Christendom during the six centuries with which he deals, he relegates the Arab geographers and travellers to a secondary place, along with the Chinese. These two latter sections of his book are full of interest, though he has nothing to tell that is not already well known to students. Islam was, above all, a religion of the sword, and Islam missionaries, at the head of armies, penetrated into all parts of Asia and into the heart of Africa. These armed missionaries, while eager for the spread of their faith, did not neglect other interests. They and the governors who were appointed by the central authorities sent to headquarters full accounts of the countries and the peoples with which they had to deal. But there were independent Islamic travellers who wandered over the face of the Old World mainly for commercial purposes, but also sometimes, apparently, from sheer curiosity. Others, again, compiled the information thus obtained into treatises more or less geographical, which, notwithstanding their being mixed up with fable and fantasy, form a striking contrast to anything of the kind to be found among Christian writers of the same period. It is with this material that Mr. Beazley has to deal in the second section of his work; he does so with interest and adequacy, and no student need hesitate to refer to his work for a fairly full and trustworthy account of Arab geography during the period from the founding of Islam to the year 900. The same may be said of the chapter in which Chinese travellers are dealt with. The outward activity of China during this period and the freedom accorded to visitors and especially merchants form a striking contrast to the conditions which have prevailed from about the date at which Mr. Beazley's volume ends. Among others Mr. Beazley deals with that remarkable traveller, Hiuen-tsang, and the "Unknown Columbus," as he has been called, whom imaginative geographers would trace from China by Alaska as far south as Mexico, in whose civilisation microscopic eyes profess to find traces of Chinese influence.

But Mr. Beazley's main theme is the geographical information to be derived from the narratives of Christian pilgrims during the period with which he deals. It is like searching for a needle in a bundle of hay; so far as geography is concerned it is not dawn but blackest midnight. All the same, Mr. Beazley has rendered an important service to the history of geography in bringing together all the available data that can be obtained as to what was done for exploration and geographical theory by Christendom during those dark centuries. Pilgrimages to the holy places in Syria began at a very early period. There are traces of them even in the first century, and by the third century they were in full swing. It was probably about 326 that St. Helena went to Jerusalem to find the true Cross. Between that and the year 900 there are records of hundreds of similar pilgrims from all parts of Western Europe, from Ireland eastwards. Besides these pilgrims there were the missionary travellers who came to our own islands, and later British and Irish missionaries who went out to the Continent of Europe, and even as far north as Iceland; for there can be little doubt that Irish missionaries visited that island long before the Norsemen found their way to it. There must have been many hundreds more of whose wanderings no record has been kept. When we come to examine the narratives of these pilgrims and missionaries the geographical information which they yield is found to be infinitesimal. With scarcely an exception they had no eyes or ears for anything but the immediate business in hand. Places and occasionally distances are mentioned—in Europe, in Egypt, in Asia. They tell us of certain towns at which they called; some of them were imprisoned by the Moslems; a few topographical details are occasionally given of holy sites; stories of miracles wrought and wonders seen; but hardly anything tangible worthy of the name of geography. Even in the well-known "Itinerary from Bordeaux to Jerusalem," by the anonymous Bordeaux pilgrim, compiled about 333 A.D., the geography is extremely meagre. Still the writer had evidently before him some of the old surveys, and he wrote what is probably one of the earliest guide-books extant. One of the most extensive travellers of the period was, no doubt, the Alexandrian merchant, Cosmas Indicopleustes, who, about the middle of the sixth century, probably went as far as India, and down the coast of East Africa. But he was a trader, and to traders during the period dealt with geography owes more than to pilgrims and missionaries, at least of the orthodox creed, for the Nestorians, there can be no doubt, spread themselves over Asia as far as China. In the chapter on geographical theory Mr. Beazley gives a full and very clear account of the extensive treatise on geography by Cosmas after he became a monk. It is fantastic and childish in the extreme, his sole object being to make the round world equal with the plan of the tabernacle and the literal statements of the Scriptures. The fact is that with the exception of one or two men like Cosmas, these pilgrims were merely the tourists of the period, and bore the same relation to the real explorer as does the pilgrim to Paris or Vienna or Rome of the present day, or the parson whose admiring congregation sends him for a three months' tour under the guidance of Cook to the Holy Land. But

Mr. Beazley has made the most of these early tourists, and in doing so, as we have said, has rendered essential service to geography, even if he has not done more than show that, so far as the history of exploration goes, the geographical student will not go far astray if he treat these itinerants with comparative neglect. Mr. Beazley discusses the legendary or semi-legendary stories of voyages like those of St. Brandan, which fall within his period, at some length.

Perhaps the most valuable section of this volume is the elaborate introduction in which Mr. Beazley summarises and discusses the results of his patient and practically exhaustive researches. But both here and in the body of the work one cannot help thinking Mr. Beazley has been much too diffuse, and has introduced a great deal that has little or no connection with the main subject. But we are not disposed to be too critical over the form in which he has chosen to cast the results of painstaking investigation. We welcome the work as a solid contribution to the history of travel and of geographical theory, and will look with interest for the succeeding volumes of Mr. Beazley's important enterprise.

SIR CHARLES HALLÉ.

LIFE AND LETTERS OF SIR CHARLES HALLÉ. London: Smith, Elder & Co.

THIS volume of musical memoirs, differing from a few others that have lately appeared, is the work of a man of brains. Its author, the late Sir Charles Hallé, was the friend, first in Paris and afterwards in London, of great composers, distinguished musicians, and illustrious men of all kinds, with poets and painters prominent among them. In Paris he was acquainted, moreover, with a certain number of political men and even statesmen, including Thiers, Guizot, and Lamartine; and after the revolution of 1848, out of which sprang the second French Republic, he was offered the post of secretary to the French legation at Frankfort, the seat of the Germanic Confederation. He hesitated, but was not lost; for he soon remembered that music was his true vocation, and that it would not become him to desert it.

He used to visit Liszt in his rooms; where, surrounded by devoted admirers, the wary pianist took care to keep no piano. At a musical party, where Liszt was one of the guests, a Polish princess took great liberties with the *tempo* of the piece she was playing, which caused a young German to exclaim: "Pas de tact! Pas de tact!" He thought that *takt* meant the same thing in German and French.

Approaching the audacious youth, Liszt whispered to him: "Madame la Princesse manque de mesure. C'est vous, monsieur, qui manquez de tact."

The same kind of mistake which this young German made in France was made—also within Hallé's hearing—by a famous German violinist and composer, Molique, in England. Believing that "who" in English was the equivalent of "wo" in German, he called out to a coachman, in whose carriage he and some friends were taking a drive: "Coachman, who are we?" "If you don't know, gentlemen, who you are yourselves I really can't inform you," replied the mystified driver.

Sir Charles Hallé's account of his misunderstanding with Heine (or rather of Heine's misunderstanding with him) is sufficiently strange. For no apparent, or at least for no assigned, reason Heine, soon after one of Hallé's concerts, cut him on the boulevard, and continued to cut him whenever they met, until suddenly one day he went up to him and spoke to him as though nothing had happened. Unable to suggest any better reason for such extraordinary conduct, Hallé thinks he may have offended the sensitive poet and too sensitive journalist by not sending him good enough places for the beforementioned concert. Meanwhile Heine, according to Sir Charles Hallé, had vented his spite against him by calling him "a small prophet," and declaring that if a whale had swallowed him it would soon have thrown him up. Here, however, Sir Charles Hallé's memory seems to have deceived him. In a letter to the *Allgemeine Zeitung* on the pianists in Paris at the time (reprinted in the *Französische Zustände*, and also in the French version of the letters to the Augsburg paper called *Lutèce*), Heine compares Liszt, Thalberg, Dreyschock, and Émile Prudent to the four greater prophets, and then among the minor prophets says that Hallé occupies about the same position as Jonah; adding, "may he never be swallowed by a whale!" It may well be, however, that in the republished letter the original phrase about Hallé, Jonah, and the whale was politely modified.

Heine wrote brilliant articles about music, as about painting, literature, politics, and every subject he touched; and in the case of Rossini's *Stabat Mater* he anticipated the popular verdict as opposed to that of all the musicians of his time. But his judgment on musical matters was sometimes very peculiar; and Sir Charles Hallé tells us that when Stephen Heller played to Heine for the first time the beautiful music which Mendelssohn had composed to his beautiful poem, "Auf Flügeln des Gesanges," he was disappointed, and said there was "no melody in the composition." This remark, from Sir Charles Hallé's point of view, is demonstrably absurd; for Mendelssohn's setting depends upon melody alone, and in no way upon harmony. But what Heine doubtless meant was that, from *his* point of view, the music was not sufficiently simple, singable, and tuneful; and, as a matter of fact, it is known to the world through Stephen Heller's, and in a less degree through Liszt's, pianoforte arrangement, but not in connection with Heine's words. What poet, indeed (Sir Charles Hallé himself asks the question), was ever satisfied with the music composed to his own verses? Mendelssohn, we fancy, would have been equally difficult to satisfy had the impossible idea ever occurred to him to ask some poet to supply the missing, or rather the absent, words to his "Lieder ohne Wörte." In this connection a curious letter from Mendelssohn (in the second part of the volume before us) may be cited, in which the writer contrasts the vagueness of words with the definiteness of music, and complains that words, being capable of so many different interpretations, form a most imperfect medium for the expression of ideas! There are some Eastern poems in which each phrase is said to possess four distinct meanings. Even then they surely speak more plainly than a piece of instrumental music, which has often a different poetic signification for every listener, while to many it has no signification at all, except a purely musical one.

The narrative in continuation of Sir Charles Hallé's autobiography, bringing the Life up to the present time, is the work of his son, Mr. Charles E. Hallé; and the work has been well done. But it was not the Beethoven "Concerto," it was the Beethoven "Sonata" that Hallé first introduced into the programmes of London concerts; and the sporting stories, though amusing and possibly true, are not new. Every foreigner who goes out shooting for the first time in England is accused of having shot a fox; and Sir Charles Hallé is not the only unskilful sportsman whose dog, after recognising his incapacity, has quietly gone home. The continuation has, in any case, the merit of bringing the work well up to date. The most precious thing it contains is a letter from Mr. Ruskin, who, after hearing Hallé play at some party (in spite of himself) the too elaborate "Home, Sweet Home" of Thalberg, went into ecstasies over it, said that it was much better than anything of Beethoven's, and, having afterwards been informed that Hallé had expressed his astonishment at such an utterance, wrote a letter of explanation and self-defence, declaring (not quite generously) that he cared

nothing for "Home, Sweet Home" as a melody, but that he loved and admired Thalberg's variations, and, above all, a new variation which he believed Hallé himself to have written. Then, to turn the tables against Hallé, he boldly asserted that if he, Ruskin, could not understand the beauty of Beethoven, neither could Hallé understand the beauty of Titian. This, as Sir Charles Hallé's son assures us, his father refused to allow. A much better analogue than Ruskin's is suggested by Sir Charles Hallé himself, who admits having told Browning that he was unable to understand his poetry. Browning, on his side, did understand music. He spoke of it with intelligence and knowledge; and Sir Charles Hallé felt convinced that he was a good executant, though Browning would never play before him.

As to the musical attainments of Ingres, the celebrated French painter, who loved music and loved still more to pose as a musician, they seem to have been poor indeed; and Hallé, who once joined him in a duet, assures us that his violin-playing was, "to say the least, vile." Ingres was a great friend of Cherubini, and has left a fine portrait of the illustrious composer, with the Muse in the background striking a lyre; and he was so much affected by music that a sentimental *adagio* would make him shed tears—to his own confusion if he himself happened to be the executant.

In England, when Hallé arrived "for good" after the French Revolution of 1848, he found very few persons, apart from professional musicians, who took any interest in music. He carried letters to Lord Brougham, who said at once that he knew nothing of music, and to Cobden, who declared that he could not tell "God Save the Queen" from any other tune. But the third letter he presented was to the Chevalier Bunsen, who took an intelligent interest in music as in so many things. He found Berlioz in London, conducting English opera. This style of performance (now extinct) he was a few years later to conduct himself; and he tells a good story of Mr. Santley singing (in the *Bohemian Girl*) the song of a fond father to a darling child while the representative of the darling child (late the property of an apple woman in the Haymarket) was struggling, kicking, and all but screaming as he half choked her with the military cloak in whose capacious folds he clasped her to his breast. The book, indeed, is full of good stories, though it would never do to print the anecdotes one after the other in catalogue form.

A HISTORY OF GREEK LITERATURE.

A History of Ancient Greek Literature. By Gilbert Murray, M.A., Professor of Greek in the University of Glasgow. ("Literatures of the World," Vol. I.) London: W. Heinemann.

Vigour and freshness, great learning and independence of judgment, are the salient characteristics of Mr. Murray's history of Greek literature. After one or two disquieting sentences in Mr. Gosse's introduction, it is a relief to find that the new series under his editorship does not enter into competition with a certain epoch-making American work that guarantees to its readers "a literary education within one week." "This work of 771 pages," so runs the Transatlantic advertisement, "covers the whole range of literature from Homer's 'Iliad,' B.C. 1200, to General Lew Wallace's 'Ben Hur,' A.D. 1880, including a Brief Biographical Sketch and fine full-page Portrait of each Author. Every one of the Fifty Books being so thoroughly reviewed and epitomised as to enable the readers of this volume to discuss them fully, making use of familiar quotations properly, and knowing the connection in which they were originally used by their Great Authors." Then follow testimonials from "practical, busy, and successful self-made men" as to the merit of the condensation. Mr. Philip D. Armour, of Chicago, who is, perhaps, predisposed to imagine that the methods which have been so successfully applied to beef and pork may be profitably extended to literature, expresses his appreciation of the volume. Governor Joseph E. Brown, of Georgia, writes:—"This is eminently a practical age; men engaged in the struggle for bread have no time to enter much into details in literature. This work entitles you to be understood as a benefactor." To all this Mr. Murray's volume—with the exception, as aforesaid, of the editorial preface—offers a striking contrast. It is a companion to the classics, not a substitute for them, nor even an introduction to them. It might be alleged, indeed, that he had written for experts instead of for the general reader. But this criticism would be a little unfair. It is true that he has not done over again what has already been done so excellently by his distinguished predecessor at Glasgow in the "Primer of Greek Literature," and in the lectures on "The Growth and Influence of Greek Poetry"; but he has certainly produced a book which, while it puts the English student abreast of all the latest work in classical research, may be read with pleasure by those who have not carried their classical studies beyond the point they reached in their sixth-form days at school.

Mr. Murray confesses the difficulty he has found in striking a balance between the scientific and literary sides of his subject. In the case of Homer the scientific scale dips heavily. There is a striking reference to the living force of certain words in Epic Greek that "call up not precisely the look or sound, but the exact emotional impression of morning and wind and sea"; but this is almost a solitary literary criticism. On the other hand, we have an admirable historical account of the process by which the "Iliad" and "Odyssey" probably became separated off from other poems equally regarded as "Homeric" in early times. Mr. Murray finds the central explanation in the Panathenaic recitations, which fixed the canonical statements of fact and the order of the incidents; afterwards "the wording of the text line by line was gradually stereotyped by continued processes of school repetition and private reading and literary study, culminating in the minute professional criticism of Zenodotus and his successors at the Alexandrian Library." When we pass from Homer, Hesiod, Orpheus, and their descendants to later Greek poetry, the literary criticism, though never lengthy, gains a little on the scientific. On the personal lyric, as compared with the choric song, we have this truly pregnant remark: "It is significant of our difficulty in really appreciating Greek poetry that we are usually so much more charmed by the style which all antiquity counted as easier and lower." Of Pindar we have this fine saying: "Often in thinking over the best pieces of Pindar—the majestic organ-playing, the grave, strong magic of language, the lightning flashes of half-revealed mystery—one wonders why this man is not counted the greatest poet that ever lived; why he has not done more, mattered more. The answer, perhaps, is that he was a poet and nothing else." The account of Euripides, who "broke himself against the bars both of life and of poetry," is one of the best things in the book—far more convincing than Mr. Verrall's "Euripides the Rationalist." Just at this moment, when so many of us are reading of Dr. Jowett's and Mr. Swinburne's contempt for the most variously estimated of Greek tragedians, Mr. Murray's sympathetic criticism has an enhanced value.

When we turn from the poets to the historians, Mr. Murray is even better. The chapters on Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon are all delightful. The picture of Thucydides returning to Athens in 403, "like a ghost from the tomb, a remnant of the old circle of Pericles," is a fine and helpful conception. Only, after Mr. Murray scoffs at the traditional Lives—according to which Thucydides "was murdered in three places and died by disease in another"—and at the modest "historical wigwam" of the great Wilamowitz-Möllendorf, what are we to say of his own daring speculation that Thucydides

aspired to be the conqueror of Brasidas and "the first military name in Greece"? The chapter on Plato, again, is charming, though there is next to nothing about the philosophy. But how good is this on Plato's attitude to poetry, which has puzzled so many readers: "Plato had based his life on the belief that hard thinking can lead men to salvation; that Truth and the Good somehow in the end coincide. He meant to work towards that end, come what might; and if Poetry interfered, he must throw Poetry overboard."

Many readers will not like Mr. Murray the less for his touches of light-hearted humour. The mention of the old oligarch "whose priceless study of the Athenian constitution is preserved to us by the happy accident of the publisher taking it for Xenophon's"; the reference to the "patriotic organisers who could not bear to leave the Trojan dogs with the best of it," and so excluded the death of Achilles from the orthodox "Iliad"; the description of Sophocles (after the scholiast) as "quite helpless in representing blasphemy"—these are samples of the good things scattered about the volume. Only Mr. Mahaffy has hitherto dared to be so flippant amid such sober themes; but Mr. Murray attains withal an ideal of accuracy that seldom keeps company with such geniality. If he is to be caught tripping at all, it is in a reference to Virgil (p. 46): it was not the sight of Helen's loveliness that stayed the sword of Æneas in the temple. In writing Leptines with a long "i" more than once Mr. Murray presumably follows some authority. Of course, being human, after all, he is not quite free from the defects of his qualities. Sometimes he reminds us a little of his own Thucydides. "He is not going to provide material for his readers to work upon. He is going to do the whole work himself, no evidence produced and no source quoted" (p. 187). Again, both in his translations (which are at times very felicitous) and in his own English style he is more careless than a lover of Greek literature should be of artistic perfection. He misses the dignity that was so conspicuous in Mr. Mackail's history of Latin literature. There is a certain lack of reverence, of the sense that in criticising the greatest art we are in the presence of mysteries to be approached with awe. Is this why his appreciation of Sophocles is a little inadequate, and why his appreciation of Virgil (as one guesses from p. 381) would perhaps be a little inadequate too? One cannot but regret the presence even of slight imperfections in a book so stimulating and profound.

ANCESTORS AND KINSFOLK.

PREHISTORIC MAN AND BEAST. By the Rev. H. N. Hutchinson. London: Smith, Elder & Co.

THE author commences his preface by saying, "This is a book intended for everybody, not for the specialist either in Geology or Archæology. Such may find here some accounts of recent researches, but the book is not written for them." Having in previous books introduced extinct monsters and other fossil creatures to the British public, he now completes the series by introducing to them their remote ancestors.

Archæology is apt to be a dull science, or, rather, it was so in the past, before there were sufficient data to enable the broad features of human progress to be outlined with anything like a convincing probability. Other circumstances that tend to dulness are the minute descriptions of the objects themselves, their mode of occurrence, and the geological features involved; all these are necessary, for tremendous conclusions may depend upon the exact position of an implement or skull, and upon the correct identification of a layer of gravel in the geological series. These data very rarely are interesting to the public, and so archæology has gained a bad name. The object of a book like the present is to vivify these details, and to endeavour to read a human interest into stone implements and other remains. The author has succeeded to a great extent in doing this by skilfully abstracting or quoting the accounts of original investigators, such as Dr. Buckland, Professor Boyd Dawkins, Dr. Munro, and many others. Mr. Hutchinson's former geological studies enable him to grasp geological arguments, and he has evidently endeavoured to "get up" the archæological part of his subject to the best of his ability; but there appears to the present writer to be rather a lack of vigour which is characteristic of secondhand information. There are, however, many expressions of personal opinion which might in some instances have been put differently with advantage. For good or ill, the author has been largely influenced by Sir Henry Howorth, whose opinions he usually subscribes to; but it would have been more seemly if he had refrained from imitating the invective style of that somewhat belligerent writer, for, to say the least of it, his remarks on Dr. Croll and other glacialists would have benefited by a little pruning.

The book is divided into two sections, the first dealing with Palæolithic Man, the cave-dwellers and the antiquity of man, including a long discussion of "the myth of the great ice sheet." The author throughout takes the moderate view of the Glacial Period and of the antiquity of man; in fact, he rather inclines to minimise both. In discussing the plateau-implements he does not refer to the Larne implements, many of which are very similar in type to the former, and some of which bear striæ which have been stated to be glacial; indeed, he scarcely does justice to Irish archæology.

The author ranges himself on the side of those who believe in a marked gap between Palæolithic and Neolithic culture, although he honestly draws attention to the "finds" in Southern Europe, which, as some archæologists believe, bridge over this hiatus. Various kinds of rude stone monuments are dealt with, and Stonehenge has a chapter to itself. Mr. Hutchinson clearly inclines to the view that it is a burial-place, and that it may have been erected by the "little folk." The chapter on these latter deals with a subject that will interest many readers. Following the suggestion of Nilsson as elaborated by MacRitchie, the author argues in favour of a dwarf race, who lived underground and used stone implements—the fairies, in short. There are numerous objections to this fascinating hypothesis, many of which have been pointed out by Mr. Hartland in his "Science of Fairy-tales." Fairy lore certainly does appear to enshrine reminiscences of the conflict between a tall, fair, immigrant, Gaelic-speaking people, and a slight, dark, autocthonous, non-Aryan people; but the problem is far more complicated than this racial theory suggests. As a matter of fact, no osseous remains of a dwarf race have been met with in Western Europe; and the author has omitted to strengthen his argument by referring to the pigmy people of Neolithic times discovered by Kollmann at Schaffhausen, or of the Sicilian and other pigmies described by Sergi and by Kollmann.

When a second edition is called for, which we hope will be the case, the author should correct several slips that he has inadvertently made—for example, the Rev. Prof. S. Haughton is still alive (p. 108); there are no dolmens in Australia (p. 243); the remarkable trilithon of Tonga is worth mentioning. The subject of prehistoric decorative art is extremely important, and although the study is as yet in its infancy, it would be well to indicate what results have been arrived at. It is evident that the author has intentionally omitted illustrations of implements, weapons, pottery, carvings, and the like; but the book loses in interest and value thereby. Though lauded by the author and Sir Henry Howorth, many of the plates are decidedly poor. The book deserves to have a wide sale, since one covering the same ground was really needed, and the author, on the whole, has successfully co-ordinated a vast and intricate subject.

FICTION.

MADGE O' THE POOL. By William Sharp. Westminster: Archibald Constable & Co.
LOVICE. By Mrs. Hungerford. London: Chatto & Windus.
PERFECTION CITY. By Mrs. Orpen. London: Hutchinson & Co.

THE name of Mr. William Sharp as a novelist is unfamiliar to us, but, judging by the remarkably clever volume of short stories entitled "Madge o' the Pool," he is a writer who will rapidly come to the front. There is no touch of the amateur in this little book, every page of which exhibits dramatic force tempered by the skill and taste of the true literary artist. Mr. Sharp's style is admirable alike in its vigour and its delicacy, and in "Madge o' the Pool" he has sketched for us the tragedy of a humble life, in its setting of squalid, inexorable misery, with the touch of a master hand. Madge, the heroine of this sorrowful story, is a girl whose environment of brutality, ignorance, and hideous obscenity—for she is the daughter of a Thames-side loafer—cannot quench utterly the divine spark of love and devotion. She is only a rough, untaught creature, a veritable child of nature; but beneath the outer husk of wild barbarism lies a noble soul, and she shrinks instinctively from the horrible wooing of her father's "pal," Ned Bull, to whom the drunken wretch is willing to sell his daughter in order to procure the means for another drinking bout. Poor Madge has hardly even heard of the abstract quality which the world regards as essential to female virtue; and so, while her whole nature revolts from any kind of union with Ned Bull, the drunken, blaspheming ruffian whom she hates, she gives herself gladly and in absolute simplicity to Jim Shaw, the chivalrous riverside policeman, who embodies for her all that is admirable and heroic in man. Her brief gleam of happiness in this union is not destined to endure, and Ned Bull's vengeance upon her and her chosen lover brings the story to a terribly tragic close. In his description of the Thames and its queer wayfarers Mr. Sharp shows great power, and the light and shade of the picture are very skilfully managed. "The Gypsy Christ" is, in its way, an equally striking story; and in the tale called "The Lady in Hosea," an episode of a more commonplace kind—the elopement of a married woman—is treated with extreme dexterity and delicacy. The characters of the wife, faithless to her husband, and of the lover, faithless to love, are outlined clearly and strongly. Every touch tells, and this little story, so caustic in its irony, so polished in every phrase, serves to show that Mr. Sharp possesses in a high degree the gifts of humour, insight, and imagination. Thus happily equipped, he should go far.

The late Mrs. Hungerford's many admirers will find in "Lovice" an abundant feast of all those good things she has so often set before them—a heroine of marvellous beauty and corresponding amiability, a perpetual flow of bantering dialogue, a dash of pathos, a touch of tragedy, and all that gentle grace and kindly humour which have invariably rendered every novel of Mrs. Hungerford's sweet and wholesome reading. Of course the story is written entirely in the present tense. That is a peculiarity of the dead novelist's methods without which one would hardly recognise her work, and one has learnt to accept it with a certain amount of equanimity, grateful for the lively chatter and girlish sweetness of the charming heroines whom Mrs. Hungerford always paints so lovingly. Lovice herself is a delightfully feminine creature, full of pretty inconsistencies and generous emotions. She has two lovers, and makes the mistake, not uncommon to her sex, of loving the man who is least worthy of her affection, whilst all the time a man of whose devotion any woman might be proud is eating out his heart in loneliness for want of her. Captain Lambert, the handsome but fickle and treacherous wooer, who deserts her from the basest of motives, has so completely won her heart that honest Jim Butler has to be content with her mere liking, even when he has succeeded in making her his wife, and the experienced novel-reader soon sees trouble ahead for the married pair when Captain Lambert appears again upon Lovice's horizon. But Mrs. Hungerford has no mind to let her pretty heroine sink into the Divorce Court through her fatal passion for a worthless fellow, and so the knot is cut in quite another way from that which appeared imminent. "Lovice" is not a book for all tastes, but to those—and they are many—who enjoy the innocent mirth and good-humoured garrulity of Mrs. Hungerford's novels it will appeal all the more strongly inasmuch as it is, unhappily, her last.

It is long since we have read a more delightful novel than Mrs. Orpen's "Perfection City." Genial humour, keen observation, and graphic description abound in its cheerful pages, and the whole book is suffused with a singularly pleasant vivacity. Mrs. Orpen writes well and easily, with sympathy and with judgment, and the reader's interest in the creatures of her imagination is never permitted to flag until the last page is reached, and the book laid down with a feeling of actual regret. Perhaps the most potent attraction of this clever story lies in its distinctive flavour of originality, for as regards its plot, characters, and setting, Mrs. Orpen has achieved the difficult task of breaking new ground, with the happiest results. In "Perfection City" the reader is taken out upon the vast spaces of the Western prairies, for the scene is laid in Kansas, and Perfection City itself is only a tiny settlement, inhabited by a few enthusiasts who are seeking to set the world to rights by the contagion of their own example. The ideal which the little band of reformers desire to realise is a lofty and yet a simple one—as old as Christianity, though to their exalted fervour it appeals as an entirely novel and untried experiment. It is, in short, a kind of Christian Socialism which Perfection City is intended to represent. Community of goods, and labour for the benefit not of the individual but of the community, are the guiding principles to which the reformers adhere with varying degrees of zeal. The founder of Perfection City and leader of its denizens is a certain Madame Morozoff-Smith, a woman whose complex nature is skilfully developed as the story progresses. This lady, despite her apparent sincerity of conviction in "the cause," has nevertheless been prompted to found and endow the settlement out of no higher motive than a selfish passion for a young man, the hero of the novel, over whom she hopes thus to establish her ascendancy. But Ezra Weston himself is so far from suspecting the truth that the opening chapter shows him bringing to Perfection City a bride of his own choosing, a mere pretty girl with whom he has suddenly fallen in love. Olive, the bride, is excellently portrayed, and is, indeed, a charming young creature, to whom the reader's sympathies go out in all her varied troubles and trials under the harsh *régime* of ideal communism. From the very first, Olive instinctively recoils from Madame Morozoff-Smith, who, in her turn, fiercely hates the innocent cause of her disappointment in love. Nothing could exceed the animation and picturesqueness of Mrs. Orpen's descriptions of the stern, laborious existence led by this strange community, whilst she sketches with admirable humour and subtlety the causes of its ultimate disintegration, and the bitter disillusioning of Ezra Weston at the hands of the jealous fury who has hitherto imposed herself upon him as an incarnation of noble womanhood. We do not intend to discount the pleasure of future readers of this charming story by revealing the details of its plot, which is worked out with much ingenuity, and affords unbroken interest throughout its course; but to all who desire an entertaining novel, free from pessimism and abounding in clever character-drawing, we heartily commend "Perfection City."

THE DIALECT SOCIETY.

English Dialect Society's Publications, 77-80. English Dialect Dictionary. Part II. Ballow—Blare. London: Henry Frowde.

With the four volumes of the Dialect Society now before us there comes a circular to say that "no more publications will be issued by the Society." Although the vigorous start of the great Dialect Dictionary is given as the reason for this decision, such decision must be received with regret and with a certain amount of surprise. The dictionary can scarcely be expected to replace the specimens and lists of books which have appeared, and we presume that Dr. Skeat will take some other method of continuing his most valuable work in this direction. The dictionary cannot, we fear, be quite as discursive as these volumes have been. Where would it find an excuse for inserting the expression, "Like a toad out of a tree—thump!" or "you're dreaming; put your hand out, and feel if you're in bed"? But whatever may be done in the future to save valuable specimens of dialect literature, we must express our feeling of admiration and gratitude to the Society which has now brought its unwearied labours to a close. The Society was started at a time when dialect seemed to be rapidly nearing an end: it is impossible to over-estimate the value of its recording work, and it has not only some, but much, "reason to be proud" of the work accomplished. The labourers are still to work for the completion of the noble dictionary, the second part of which carries us down to "Blare." The last line asks unnecessarily "What bist ablarin' and starin' thur for?" We are blarin', or wandering, through these very interesting pages to find an omission or a mistake to show how wise we are. And our proudest boast is that we point out the omission of "yks" and the great Barnaby Bright Fair of Boroughbridge. And under the word "Behither" we should have been glad to see George Herbert's difficult expression, "Behither ill." The examples given refer strictly to place. "Barnard Castle" as a term of reproach has a good deal of history wrapped up in itself, and a fair quantity of human nature can be got out of Batchflour. The word came to mean common flour, because to people sending in their batches of wheat, however good, the miller gave back in flour "what he thought," and what he thought was usually some common flour specially ground for the purpose. Under the word "Bee" are registered some pretty observances connected with the "little brownies" of the hives. Such details as these will be the not least valuable portion of the work.

"FISHTAILS."

Fishtails, and Some True Ones. By Bradnock Hall. London: Edward Arnold.

Oppressed by a reputation for Puritanical sobriety, the author of "Fishtails" relieves himself, he tells us, by the anonymous production of a "frivolous, shallow book." These are not its faults—fishing is a serious not a frivolous pastime; nor is his acquaintance with its science superficial—but it is a book lacking strength and colour; its adventures are unexciting, its descriptions indistinct, its style rayless. Experts following each recorded capture, from the first tightening of the line to the final brutality of the gaff, miss the quickened pulse which chroniclers of sport should communicate as well as feel. "Laymen," as the writer calls them, chancing on the book, will be prone, with Anceps, in "The Complete Angler," to pronounce the Gentle Art "a heavy, contemptible, dull recreation." Its piscatory eclogues are not all upon a level. There is humour in the little girl hooking with a bent pin the trout which her contemptuous brother's shop-made tackle fails to circumvent; force somewhat lurid in "The Largest Fish," the missing "slavey" at Lyme Regis appearing on the sea-line of her mistress fishing in the bay; unfulfilled promise in the faint sketch of Mr. Anderson of Dipton; sympathetic insight in the portraits of the two Norwegian boatmen. Good, too, is the City Porter, who enhances the rapture of gudgeon-fishing on a still removed Thames bank by keeping open in front of him a picture of the crowd on Margate sands; good, and novel, the schoolboy construe of *nemo repente fuit turpissimus*. These chapters are the best; there remain somewhat trivial tales of childish pranks; hecatombs of Norway trout and salmon with much sameness in their slaughter; impossible Oxford characters like Wilton of Magdalen; though, since the author's University friends nowadays greet one another at the beginning of term with "How d'ye do, old chap," undergraduates may have altered since our time. John Wesley once denounced a sermon as containing no *likes;* he would have been drawn to "Fishtails," whose similitudes are as numerous and as recondite as those of Mr. Whitbread's famous speech. Catching three pike with a trimmer, our angler feels like Sawyer late Nockemorf; his minnow falls into a pool like Silas Wegg into Sloppy's mudcart; and a salmon landed on the stones is like Napoleon on the deck of the *Bellerophon*. Misquotation is in keeping, we suppose, with the general revolt against seriousness, or we might observe that Shakespeare nowhere used the phrase "multitudinously incarnadined," nor did Tennyson contrast one hour of glorious life with a cycle of Cathay, or speak of two children in two *neighbouring* villages. "Portentous dull," "*post obita dicta*," and "by Salisbury clock," we prefer to regard as misprints. The illustrations are good, some very good; the title is unintelligible, the cover fantastic. The book "breeds no dainties," as Sir Nathaniel the Curate says. The author will have purged his soul by an anti-priggish protest, those who divine his secret will forgive him, Anders and Eric will be uplifted in their far-off home; but neither to the angler's bag nor to the traveller's paper-knife will the erudition or the readableness of "Fishtails" recommend it.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS.*

It may be doubted whether there was any necessity for a special group of books on Famous Scots, but since a series on such lines has been started, it is not open to question that "Fletcher of Saltoun" has excellent claims to a place in it. Andrew Fletcher was born at Saltoun, in the county of Haddington, in the year 1653, and died in London in the autumn of 1716. His name, and a famous but generally misquoted saying about the relative importance of the making of the ballads and the laws of the people, are about all that the average man knows about him, and yet at the beginning of the end of the seventeenth century, and even later, he played a great part in the political life and public affairs of Scotland. His father, Sir Robert Fletcher of Saltoun, was snatched away by death before the child was two, but not before he had solemnly entrusted the education of his son to Gilbert Burnet, whom he had just presented to the living of Saltoun, and who afterwards became Bishop of Salisbury, and the author of a book which Charles Lamb was never tired of praising, the picturesque, garrulous, inaccurate "History of His Own Times." "According to family tradition, Burnet imbued his pupil with 'erudition and the principles of free government'; and perhaps it is not mere fancy which leads us to picture the keen, eager, excitable boy reading the 'Book of Martyrs,' and listening to Burnet, who describes his system of education, in the account which he gives of the manner in which he taught the Duke of Gloucester in after years. 'I took,' he says, 'to my own province, the reading and explaining the Scriptures to him, the instructing him in the principles of religion, and the rules of virtue, and the giving him a view of history, geography, politics, and government.' History, politics, and the theory of government, these were, all through his life, Andrew Fletcher's favourite studies; and we cannot doubt that Burnet not only drilled him thoroughly in Greek and Latin, but also fostered that taste for letters from which not even the turmoil of politics could ever wean him." The love of political freedom grew strong in the lad, and it was confirmed by what he saw abroad; for, like other youths of fortune, he made the grand tour of Europe, and picked up a creditable knowledge of French and Italian. Extremely little, however, is known of this part of his life, but in 1678 he entered the Scottish Parliament as member for Haddingtonshire, but he quickly incurred by his speeches the implacable enmity of the Duke of York, and presently had to take refuge in Holland. Quite early in his stormy and romantic career he became intimate with Lord William Russell, Algernon Sidney, and other political leaders. He was mixed up with the early stages of Monmouth's Rebellion, and Mr. Omond describes at length his subsequent adventures and the part which he played in relation to the ill-fated Darien Expedition and in the struggle which Scotland made against her inevitable union with England. His speeches in the Scottish Parliament were remarkable for their courage no less than their eloquence, and they were supported by political writings which even now are of more than purely historical interest. After the passing of the Act of Union, Fletcher retired in chagrin from public life, and devoted all his energies to a series of agricultural reforms. "The political schemes of Fletcher may have been visionary, but that he honestly believed in them is evident. The Utopias which he loved to imagine may have been wild dreams, but there was always something noble in the ideals which he set up. His faults were those of a man of ardent temper. . . The men of his own day, even those who most widely disagreed with him in his views on public questions, seem all to admire him, with only one or two

* Fletcher of Saltoun. By G. W. T. Omond. (Famous Scots Series.) Edinburgh and London: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier.

In the Land of Tolstoi: Experiences of Famine and Misrule in Russia. By Jonas Stadling and Will Reason. Illustrated. London: James Clarke & Co.

History in Fact and Fiction. By the Hon. A. S. G. Canning. London: Smith, Elder & Co.

Naples in the Nineties. By E. Neville-Rolfe, H.B.M. Consul for Southern Italy, Author of "Naples in 1888." Illustrated. London: Adam & Charles Black.

War, Famine, and Our Food Supplies. By R. B. Marston. Illustrated. London: Sampson Low & Co.

Municipal Reform in the United States. By Thomas C. Devlin. ("Questions of the Day" Series.) New York and London: Putnam's Sons.

Intaglio Engraving, Past and Present. By Edward Renton. London: George Bell & Sons.

exceptions. One of these exceptions is Swift, whose description of him is—'A most arrogant, conceited pedant in politics, who cannot endure any contradiction in any of his views or paradoxes.' But a Scotsman was to Swift like a red rag to a bull." If Fletcher of Saltoun was positive, obstinate, and passionate, he was honest, able, and in certain directions far-seeing. He was a man of restless energy, lofty purpose, and almost fierce public spirit. His overbearing temper marred his career, for with all his gifts he lacked the sovereign grace of self-control, and grew in consequence imperious and headstrong when opposed. Mr. Omond has told the story of Fletcher of Saltoun in this monograph with ability and judgment.

"In the Land of Tolstoi," is an interesting, though a somewhat belated book. Events of supreme political importance have followed one another so rapidly in recent years in Russia that it already seems a long time since the terrible famine, which made the spring of 1892 memorable in the dark and sinister sense. Herr Stadling went to Russia in that year on a philanthropic mission, and was the bearer of help to the distressed peasants. His errand of mercy brought him into brief, but whilst it lasted close, relations with Count Tolstoi; and more than half the charm of the book—which, in English form, is the work of Mr. Reason—is due to that circumstance. The economic causes of the famine are traced in these pages, and this is followed by a realistic and detailed description of the appalling misery of the people in rural Russia. The money-lenders are the curse of the peasant, and the manner in which the poor are fleeced by such extortioners is deplorable. The consequence is poverty is chronic. "It is very usual when, for instance, a loan of twenty-five roubles is made, for one month, to require a repayment of fifty roubles; should these not be paid on the exact day, a fine of five roubles a week is exacted. Frequently, the lending is done on a kind of pawnbroking system—clothes, household goods, agricultural implements, stock and land being pledged as securities. In other cases, the borrowers pledge their labour, which is exacted at the busiest season of the year, and valued often at half the market rate of wages. If, for example, a borrower has engaged to be responsible for the complete working of a piece of his creditor's land—that is, to plough, sow, and reap it—he gets no more than two or three roubles per hectare, while the customary price is seven or eight roubles." There are some interesting bits of Count Tolstoi's table-talk in the volume, and many facts which throw into bold, and often terrible, relief the hopeless lot of the peasantry.

Without doubt, "History in Fact and Fiction" is an attractive title, but it belongs to a singularly dull and ineffectual book. Mr. Canning is as mighty in platitudes as in quotations, and the result is depressing. He has written a desultory, pretentious book, and we confess that we have found it full of irritating, vague statements, and destitute to a grievous extent of ideas. At best, Mr. Canning merely touches the fringe of the subject he undertakes to handle, and his literary judgments are often curiously inadequate.

Amongst other books which only call for running comment are Mr. E. Neville-Rolfe's "Naples in the Nineties"; Mr. Robert Marston's "War, Famine, and Our Food Supply"; and Mr. Devlin's "Municipal Reform in the United States." People in search of a brightly written, unconventional holiday handbook to Naples past and present could scarcely do better than procure Mr. Neville-Rolfe's fascinating volume. It describes with ample knowledge and enviable lucidity many phases of Neapolitan life which are apt to escape the attention of a stranger in the streets of that beautiful city. The chapters on the legendary goddesses of Southern Italy and the buried cities of Campania are of exceptional interest. Mr. Marston's book is the expansion of a magazine article, and contains many additional facts and some additional arguments in support of his well-known views in regard to the national danger of starvation in the event of a great European war. The book is written with racy vigour, and the subject is one which is entitled to consideration. Mr. Devlin's monograph belongs to an American series of books, entitled "Questions of the Day." He makes out a very clear case as to the urgent need of "Municipal Reform in the United States," and he also shows what steps have already been taken—and some of them are not less bold than praiseworthy—to secure local self-government on wise and enlightened lines.

Mr. Renton is an enthusiast for the art in the cultivation of which he is following in the footsteps of his grandfather and his father, and two of his uncles; and in his pretty little book he has set himself to infecting others with his enthusiasm. He takes it ill of us that we flock not merely to our own exhibitions of paintings, but to the galleries of foreign lands, and leave unexplored the beautiful collections of intaglio engraving which waste their antiquity on the air of deserted museums. Not ten nor even six well-informed persons, he complains, out of a hundred could discern the difference between a false and a real intaglio—a lamentable state of things which this volume of his should help to remedy. It is simply and clearly written, and excellently printed. There are a number of useful illustrations, beginning with that familiar representation of a mammoth for which we are indebted to some cave-dwelling "artist unknown."

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